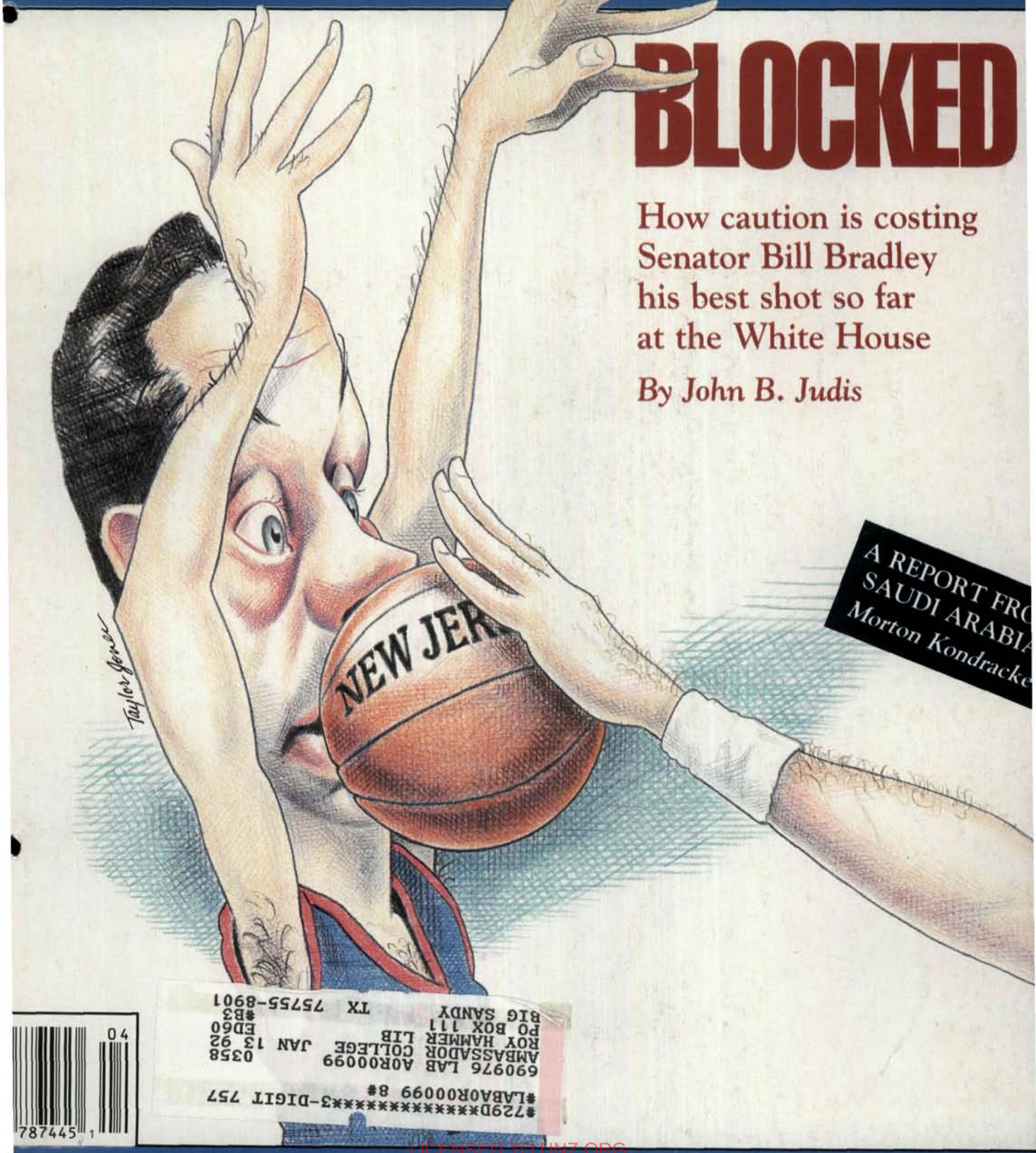
MICHAEL WALZER ON IRAQ: A JUST WAR . . . JUST

JANUARY 28, 1991 • $2.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

How we blew the King plagiarism story

How Bob Strauss bilked Toky



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How caution is costing Senator Bill Bradley his best shot so far at the White House

By John B. Judis

A REPORT FRO
SAUDI ARABI
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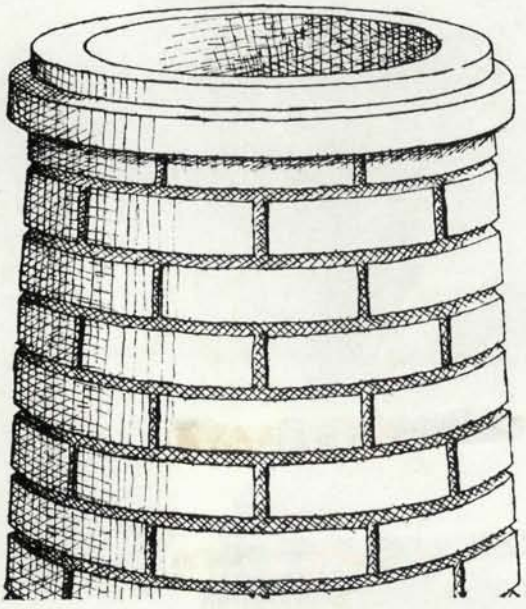
A fuming smokestack is the perfect symbol of our national dilemma. On one hand, it means the jobs and products we need. On the other, it means pollution. ❧ Some think having one without the other will take a miracle. We think it will take natural gas. ❧ Because gas, the cleanest of all fossil fuels, can reduce emissions across the board. You name it— CO, CO_2, NO_x, SO_2, particulates — and natural gas combustion produces none or substantially less. ❧ But gas is more than clean. It's extremely efficient as well. So even fewer pollutants are created since less fuel is expended to do a job. ❧ Which also reduces costs. And that's another argument favoring gas. It makes the fight against pollution more affordable. ❧ And, since nature blessed North America with vast stores of gas, it's a fight we can definitely win. With energy security and a better trade balance as a bonus. ❧ Natural gas. It's not the only answer. Just the best one we have right now.



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FROM WASHINGTON

Feelings of warmth

Ms. Byatt is more annoyed [with] American publishers who insist on changing English idioms and spellings for American audiences. She got off quite easily in "Possession." The lifts and taps stayed. But, she says, her editors at Random House insisted she make her main character . . . a sexier guy. So early in the novel, British readers learn Roland "was a small man, with soft startling black hair and small regular features." American readers get several additional sentences, mentioning, among other things, Roland's "smile of amused friendliness and pleasure," which often "aroused feelings of warmth, and sometimes more, in many women."

—From a profile of A. S. Byatt, author of the best-selling British novel *Possession*, on *The Wall Street Journal*'s "Leisure & Arts" page

Dear Ms. Austen:

Random House is pleased to have won the auction for American rights to your best-selling British romance, *Pride and Prejudice*. We are confident that American readers will be able to overcome the book's British cultural references and provincial setting to embrace its universally marketable themes of sex and money. Just a few small editing changes are all it will take to raise your work up to American standards of salaciousness and greed.

We foresee little problem with the hero, Mr. Darcy. You introduce him as possessing a "fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien; and . . . ten thousand a year." We might want to make that a hundred thousand a year. Oh, and when he reveals his initial snobbish attitude, you give him "a most forbidding, disagreeable countenance." Couldn't we make that, say, "a haughty sneer which aroused feelings of warmth, and sometimes more, in many women"?

The heroine, Elizabeth Bennet, needs work. Her own mother describes her, on page 2, as "not half so handsome as" her sister. The next description is Mr. Darcy's, who says, "She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt *me*." Of course we understand you intend to be ironic here, but irony—alas—doesn't move product Stateside. Could we at least say she has "flashing, intelligent eyes which arouse feelings of warmth, and sometimes more, in many men"? I think that would keep the reader engaged until the first torrid sex scene, between Jane Bennet and Mr. Bingley, which we propose to insert on page 15. . . .

Dear Mr. Dickens:

May I call you Chuck? Chuck, we're really excited about publishing your saga of Reaganite greed and corruption, *A Christmas Carol*. Your reworking of Ivan Boesky, Donald Trump, and Michael Milken into the single character of Ebenezer Scrooge is brilliant, brilliant. And the special effects stuff is great—sort of "Masterpiece Theatre" meets *Ghostbusters*, as one of our sales guys put it. But our subsidiary rights folks are concerned that Scrooge lacks the sex appeal necessary to interest the Hollywood contingent. "The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shriveled his cheek, stiffened his gait, made his eyes red, his thin lips blue, and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice." To be sure, Chuck, to be sure. But are you aware that thin lips have been known to arouse feelings of warmth, and sometimes more, in many women? Perhaps we should bring that out a little more.

Greed is sexy, Chuck. That's your story. How about: "The cold within him sent delicious shivers down the spines of the women on his staff. . . ."? Then make the nose aquiline instead of pointed, the cheeks high-boned instead of shriveled, make it blue eyes and red lips instead of red eyes and blue lips, and a gravelly instead of a grating voice (same thing, after all), and we're in business. Know what I'm saying? Just a word here and there can make all the difference. Don't thank us. That's what editors are for. . . .

Dear Mr. Hemingway:

We are delighted to have been chosen as the British publisher for your novel, *The Sun Also Rises*. We're delighted to see that your hero, Jake Barnes, appears to be impotent. In matters touching on relations between the sexes, American literary characters are sometimes a bit too aggressive for the British reader. And the phenomenon of male impotence arouses feelings of warmth, and sometimes more, in many British women.

But something really must be done about the female character, Lady Brett Ashley. "Brett was damned good-looking. . . . She was built with curves like the hull of a racing yacht, and you missed none of it with that wool jersey." Mr. Hemingway, please. We must adjust the temperature here. The wool jersey is fine; our readers believe in dressing warmly, particularly in drafty houses and nippy weather. But the racing yacht won't do at all. Might we suggest: "Brett was not unattractive, except for a figure like the hull of an ocean liner that aroused feelings of coolness, and sometimes less, in many men"?

Dear Bret Easton Ellis:

Bottom Drawer Books is thrilled to have won the right to publish the British edition of your controversial new novel, *American Psycho*. Your story of a young professional investment banker who tortures and murders women in his spare time is an American "bad boy" classic in the tradition of *Huckleberry Finn* and *Catcher in the Rye*. Our editors read it and thought, "Yes! This is America as we know it." We cannot imagine why no other British publisher chose to bid.

However, a few small emendations will be necessary to make your book acceptable to a British audience. Descriptions of gratuitous violence arouse feelings of discomfort, and sometimes more, in many English women. For example, in the scenes where a young girl's head is surgically removed and when she is electrocuted by having motor car cables clipped to her bosom, might we perhaps . . . ?

On second thought, never mind.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

NEXT WEEK:

What multiculturalism is doing to Beethoven

by Edward Rothstein

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Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf

A Strategy to Secure Peace in the Gulf

Why We Are in the Gulf

Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait, backed by chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction, represents the first real crisis of the post cold war era.

How this crisis is resolved will shape the structure of the post cold war world. Will it be a world where aggression is once again a routine method for the resolution of disputes between countries? Or will it be a world where considerations of justice and international law prevail over brute force and naked aggression?

If the coalition arrayed against Iraq's aggression succeeds, the institutions of international order and law will emerge greatly strengthened. Others tempted to emulate Saddam Hussein would be deterred by the lesson of his defeat. A stabilizing balance of power in the Gulf would become a real possibility.

A triumph by Saddam Hussein in Kuwait would undermine moderate Arab regimes, precipitating the overthrow of those governments courageous enough to oppose him, and their replacement by regimes in sympathy not only with his ends, but his means as well. It would eliminate whatever chance there may be in this century for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. It would ignite a race throughout the region to acquire weapons comparable to Iraq's. It would set the stage for another Arab-Israeli war.

President Bush has made Iraq's unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait our principal objective. We believe that we must also find ways to remove Saddam Hussein's capacity to wage aggression, which now includes chemical and biological weapons and may soon include nuclear weapons as well.

Saddam Hussein has now launched two wars in less than a decade. Determined to dominate the entire Middle East, Saddam Hussein will inevitably go to war again unless he is stopped now.

If Saddam Hussein were to prevail, he would emerge as the dominant leader in the Arab world. Through conquest and intimidation, he would gain control or significant influence over half the world's proven oil reserves. With his hands on the world's economic jugular, he would threaten the security and well-being of all nations. He would surely use this power to accelerate his drive for nuclear weapons.

We believe that:

- The United Nations is right to reject an outcome which leaves Saddam Hussein in control of Kuwaiti territory, resources or assets, for this would reward aggression and set an intolerably dangerous precedent.
- Only a combination of effective economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation and a convincing threat to use force should it prove necessary offers a real hope that the use of force can be avoided.
- Even if Saddam Hussein agrees to withdraw from Kuwait, the threat posed by his weapons of mass destruction requires that they be verifiably dismantled—or, if necessary, destroyed.
- A military solution would regrettably result in casualties, but ruling out the use of force would eventually be even more costly. If Iraqi aggression cannot be reversed through other means, the coalition whose military might has been assembled in the Gulf will have no alternative but to use force.
- A decision to use force must be made only after consultation with the Congress and in the knowledge that the international community has consistently, through a series of U.N. resolutions and in other ways, supported the coalition opposing Iraq's aggression. Many countries have sent forces to the Gulf. If force must be used, we will not be alone.
- If the American people debate and understand the vital issues at stake, then Americans will value and support a policy of determination and action.

We take one additional lesson from history: public and congressional support is essential to successful foreign policy. Our national leadership, from both political parties and from all walks of life, must explain and debate U.S. interests and involvement in this crisis with clarity and candor.

It is in the belief that we can and must succeed in this endeavor that we have joined in this statement,

Securing the Peace

President Bush has marshalled a broadly based international coalition that has given unprecedented support to U.N.-mandated sanctions against Iraq. Moreover, for the first time since the end of the Second World War, the superpowers are working together to contain aggression through the United Nations in the way that the founders of the world organization had hoped. If the world had responded in this way over fifty years ago when Italy invaded Ethiopia, when Japan attacked Manchuria, and when Hitler occupied the Rhineland, perhaps the horrors of World War II could have been avoided.

Signatories*

Honorable Kenneth L. Adelman
Former Director, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

Professor Fouad Ajami
Director, Middle East Studies, Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies

Honorable Richard V. Allen
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Ambassador Sam H. Zakhem
Former U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt
Former Chief of Naval Operations

The Committee has been incorporated as a nonprofit organization.

Yes, I agree with the statement of the Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf. Here is my contribution to support the Committee's work.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Tithings of comfort and joy

To the editors:

I keenly look forward to James S. Henry applying his three decades of rigorous economic training to other wasteful practices ("Why I Hate Christmas," December 31). Some suggestions:

Gardening: The average gardener spends fifty times as much time in unrewarding labor as he does enjoying his garden. The flowers grown have no lasting value. The costs, direct and indirect, of gardening-related injuries are astonishing. And the whole process constitutes an absurd waste of land. Plant sycamore trees, to fight the greenhouse effect, and donate the time and money saved to the Audubon Society.

Weddings: The few hours of enjoyment are dwarfed by the time and expense of arranging the wedding and buying gifts. A donation to UNICEF in honor of the couple is much more appropriate. Ditto for birthday parties, bar mitzvahs, etc.

Music lessons: The hours of torment suffered by children learning to play instruments and by their families are rarely recompensed by any music that could not be heard more easily and cheaply from records or audio.

ERNEST DAVIS
New York, New York

To the editors:

James Henry's litany of social costs associated with our annual Christmas commemoration is impressive. But so is the fact that our society is quite willing to pay such a price for its traditions. One must conclude that we value these customs sufficiently to endure their costs.

If demand for Christmas products and activities has been artificially inflated, or if the market has otherwise failed to balance societal costs and benefits, then intervention into the marketplace might be justified. But Henry has not suggested that is the case. He has simply taken the meat-cleaver approach to a perceived problem, calling for a moratorium on Christmas expenditures beyond some unspecified level, when all he has done is present a cost-benefit analysis that ignores the benefit side of the equation. No wonder he has concluded that our expenditures are excessive.

JOSEPH K. GERBERG
Watertown, Massachusetts

To the editors:

It seems thirty years of rigorous economic training have stripped James Henry of more than his nostalgia. Economic models are a poor touchstone for the value of Christmas. I, for one, don't live my life to improve the savings rate or boost productivity. The gleam of delight in a child's eyes, the joy that comes from taking time to acknowledge people we care about, and, yes, even a little nostalgia are the stuff that give Christmas, and life, meaning and value. In the end, these tokens of human currency more than compensate for the negatives. Mr. Henry's skewed view of the holidays isn't the result of East Coast living. He's merely put too much faith in economics and not enough in people.

MICHAEL HYNES
New York, New York

Tinkerer, tailor, soldier, spy

To the editors:

It was no surprise that TNR did not like *By Way of Deception*. Anything or anyone daring to criticize Israel continues to be dismissed out of hand by your writers. What was surprising was the shoddy misrepresentation of our book by Steven Emerson ("Spook Kook," November 19).

Emerson, who apparently accepts everything told him by Israeli officials, claims that "for the most part the book is a fabrication." If so, why has Israel tried so hard to block its publication, and why, in documents filed in U.S. and Canadian courts, does it claim that all the published documents, charts, and much of the other material in the book belong to it?

Emerson dismisses the story that the FBI sent a special team to Beirut in search of kidnapped CIA bureau chief William Buckley. He should tell Bob Woodward about that, since Woodward also uses that information in his book *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA*.

For Emerson, straw men are everywhere. He accuses Ostrovsky of claiming firsthand involvement in the incident where the Mossad refused to divulge to the U.S. all it knew in the matter that ended in the tragic suicide bombing of the U.S. Marine compound in Beirut. Ostrovsky was not there at the time. We do not claim he was. But Emerson, having told your readers that Ostrovsky claimed to have been there, then dismisses the story on the grounds that Ostrovsky indeed was not directly involved.

The cheapest shot was Emerson's parroting of Israel's scurrilous claim that the book has "put the lives of [Ostrovsky's] former colleagues at risk." That claim did not stand up to scrutiny by the courts. And the use of a first name and last initial is standard media practice in Israel when reporting on subjects of this nature.

CLAIRE HOY
Ottawa, Ontario

The writer is co-author of *By Way of Deception*.

Steven Emerson replies:

Mr. Hoy says Mr. Ostrovsky never claimed to have firsthand knowledge of the 1983 Marine barracks bombing. Really? I quote from his book (p. 322): "At the Mossad headquarters, there was a sigh of relief that it wasn't us who got hit. . . . For me, it was the first time I had received a major rebuke from my Mossad superior, liaison officer Amy Yaar. I said at the time that American soldiers killed in Beirut would be on our minds longer than our own casualties. . . . I was told: 'Just shut up. . . .' " Now Hoy admits that Ostrovsky was not yet at the Mossad during this episode. This not only shows that the "event"—which garnered most of the book's attention-grabbing headlines—was concocted; it also shows that much of the rest of the book, which recounted Ostrovsky's supposed firsthand Mossad experiences in 1982 and 1983, was also fabricated.

Hoy implies that he followed the Israeli media practice of naming only the first names of Israeli agents. Yet the book includes the full names of more than two dozen agents.

Hoy implies he was privy to the same "information" as Bob Woodward. A closer comparison of Hoy's description of that information in his book and the passage in Mr. Woodward's earlier book *Veil* shows a near verbatim similarity. Woodward wrote (p. 453): "An expert FBI team trained in locating kidnap victims was sent to Beirut: It came up with nothing after a month." Ostrovsky and Hoy wrote (p. 323): ". . . an expert FBI team specially trained in locating kidnap victims was dispatched to Beirut to find him. But after a month, they'd come up with nothing." I may have erred in saying the book was merely "for the most part, a fabrication." In some places it's a carbon copy as well.

Attendant woes

To the editors:

In "The Lord of Flatbush" (Washington Diarist, December 3) Leon Wieseltier criticized my good friend Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League. He asks how Abe would respond if Benjamin Hooks went to the funeral of Farrakhan. I think I can answer for Abe. He would not criticize Hooks for attending the funeral if Farrakhan had been killed by a white racist and if the event appeared to be a political assassination. Wieseltier misses the point. Abe did not appear at Rabbi Kahane's funeral to honor Kahane but rather to protest the event that gave rise to his death.

BURTON S. LEVINSON
Los Angeles, California

The writer is honorary national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

JANUARY 28, 1991

TOM FOLEY, GUN NUT

The statistics do not cease to shock. From 1979 to 1987, according to the U.S. Department of Justice, an average of 639,000 violent crimes were committed with handguns, including 9,200 murders, 15,000 maimings, and 12,100 rapes. And these are annual averages, not cumulative totals. In 1988, a below-average year for handgun slaughter, 8,915 people were murdered in the United States; in Britain the number was seven. In 1989 the number rose to 9,536. Every day ten American children under the age of 18 are killed with handguns. Every three hours a teenager impulsively commits suicide with a handgun.

Killing with a handgun is as simple as playing with a Nintendo game: you just point it at what you don't like and push the button. "Guns don't kill people, people kill people," goes the National Rifle Association's singsong slogan. But—and this point cannot be repeated too often, alas—people with guns kill people far more effortlessly than people with knives, fists, or bottles of poison. In spite of the most blood-soaked year on record in many cities, the NRA is trying more avidly than ever to spread deadly weapons. In a case now before the Supreme Court, the NRA, dropping the usual blather about "sporting purposes," is arguing that the Constitution protects every American's right to own a machine gun.

How can the gore be stanched? On March 30, 1981, James Brady, the White House press secretary, was permanently disabled by a bullet fired by John Hinckley in the course of the attempted assassination of President Reagan. In the years since, Mr. Brady and his wife, Sarah, have become prominent crusaders against handgun violence. In 1988 the group with which they are associated, Handgun Control, Inc., began advocating the passage of a federal law that would establish a one-week waiting period for buyers of pistols, during which interval the police would check if the purchaser has a criminal background. If not, the sale would be approved and all record of the investigation destroyed. This almost absurdly modest proposal, which has become known as the Brady Bill, attracted 151 co-sponsors in the House. According to a Gallup poll, 95 percent of the public supported it. And a Yankelovich poll showed that even among gun owners, 87 percent favored the law, in spite of the NRA's $4 million campaign to kill it. Twelve major law enforcement groups—every significant one in the country—also endorsed the proposal. Last year, toward the end of the session of the 101st Congress, the Brady Bill finally made it to the House Rules Committee. But it was never allowed to come to a vote on the floor. Why? Or, more to the point: Who?

In this disgraceful drama the NRA, as usual, played the villain. But in shooting down the Brady Bill the country's most sanguinary special interest lobby had an unlikely sidekick. Speaker of the House Thomas P. Foley, rightly renowned for his civility and decency, has an almost instinctive aversion to passionate enthusiasm. Yet he went far out of his way, flouting the will of the House Democratic Caucus and the likely majority of the House as a whole, to display an unwonted zealotry in a dubious cause. The Rules Committee chairman, Joseph Moakley of Massachusetts, a co-sponsor of the Brady Bill, remarked: "If I had my druthers we'd have a vote, but it's the Speaker's call."

After the Brady Bill was bottled up, the Speaker made another call. He directed the Rules Committee to attach an NRA-promoted amendment to the crime bill that undermined President Bush's position on assault weapons. The president's bill would have prevented the domestic assembly of military-style semiautomatic weapons banned for import; the insidious Foley-backed bill would have permitted these weapons to be made from domestic parts.

The subplot revealed a good deal about how gun control bills are killed. Representative Jolene Unsoeld, a Democrat from Mr. Foley's home state of Washington, introduced the NRA amendment. The next day she calmly accepted a campaign contribution of

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$4,950 from the NRA's political action committee. On October 4 the NRA proposal, now known as the Unsoeld amendment and fully supported by the Speaker, passed the House.

Mr. Foley does not face serious opposition for re-election in his district. In 1990 he defeated a sacrificial lamb by a 69-31 percent margin. But beneath his seemingly imperturbable surface apparently lurks the terror of being accused of favoring gun control—an accusation leveled against him by an opponent early in his political career. Since then, he has never wavered in his support of the NRA. "I'm from the West, where 'Drop yer guns' is fightin' words," the urbane Mr. Foley once explained. *The American Rifleman*, the official journal of the NRA, has praised him for devotion to its line:

> He was an outspoken opponent of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in its 1978 effort to impose firearms registration and opposed the Consumer Product Safety Commission's backdoor attempt to put controls on firearms and ammunition. Rep. Foley worked to exempt .22 rimfire ammunition from senseless federal record keeping a few years back, and he helped to fight off efforts to abolish the Civilian Marksmanship Program. For these and other efforts on behalf of the nation's gun owners, Rep. Foley was among the first members of Congress to receive the NRA's Defender of Individual Rights Award.

This encomium was prompted by Foley's speech paying homage to the NRA at its 1987 banquet, where he posed for photographs in front of the NRA insignia clutching a rifle.

Representative Foley, however, is not just another congressman whose reflexive capitulation to a noisy interest group will be lost in the din. He is the Speaker of the House, and it is not only the Speaker's duty but also his political need to abstain from acting in ways so cowardly or unreasonable that his general leadership is thrown into question. Yet on the Brady Bill he has behaved as if driven by the timid parochialism of a backbencher.

Crime and violence are pathologies with profound social and cultural roots. They are not subject to panaceas. In any case, given the magnitude of the problem, the Brady Bill is a pathetically unambitious measure. Its effect would be to prevent a few dozen or perhaps a few hundred people from being killed by handguns per year—a small matter, unless one happens to be, or to be acquainted with, one of those few dozen or few hundred. But even this small effort has been suppressed by the Speaker.

With the convening of the 102nd Congress, the Brady Bill is back, introduced by Representative Edward Feighan of Ohio. Mr. Foley's office now says that this time the Speaker will allow the bill to come to the floor for a vote. Apparently the outcry following his actions last year has forced him to take a half-step backward. His spokesman adds that Mr. Foley himself has never deigned to take an actual position on the Brady Bill. That is not quite true. So far the Speaker has shown nothing but weakness in the face of the gun lobby—a weakness, in this instance, that cannot be distinguished from softness on crime. ●

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

THE HAWK FACTOR

By Fred Barnes

Not to worry, those of you not invited to private White House meetings between President Bush and congressional leaders on American policy in the Persian Gulf. You haven't missed a thing. On January 3 Bush chatted with twenty-eight senators and representatives. They were breathtakingly deferential. Bush was restrained. House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt voiced support for Bush, but added that congressional approval is needed before troops are sent into combat. "Thank you very much," Bush said. "I appreciate your viewpoint." Claiborne Pell, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, opposed the use of force, even after the January 15 deadline for Iraqi troops to evacuate Kuwait. "Well, I thank you, Claiborne," said Bush. "I disagree with you." Robert Byrd, president pro tempore of the Senate, said Bush should "think twice and three times" before going to war. Byrd ended his soliloquy this way: "I pray for you, Mr. President, and for our boys over there." Bush was silent.

The respectful minuet at Bush-Congress meetings—there have been fifteen since Iraq invaded Kuwait last August 2—is deceptive, especially in Bush's case. On the Gulf, he has passionate feelings. He regards Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as evil incarnate. Hearing stories of Iraqi atrocities in Kuwait, fed to him by both the emir of Kuwait and Brent Scowcroft, his national security adviser, only reinforced this view. He's convinced the issue in the Gulf is between right and wrong. "On a lot of issues, he believes reasonable people can come to an agreement," says a White House official. "On this issue, he has the idea he's right." Thus, compromise is unacceptable. In the first fifteen minutes of his TV interview by David Frost on December 16, Bush ruled out compromise nineteen separate times. At one point, he closed his eyes while discussing Iraqi brutality that, Bush said, "is close to unprecedented in history."

Since the invasion, Bush has gone through mood swings. He was on an even keel until he visited American troops in Saudi Arabia over Thanksgiving. For the following three weeks, Bush was "pensive, subdued, preoccupied," an aide says. Bush is normally a teaser, "but that was gone. You went into meetings with him, did your business, and left." Bush scarcely focused on anything but the Gulf. He delegated the selection of a Republican national chairman to John Sununu, the White House chief of staff. Over the Christmas holidays, Bush spent twelve straight days at Camp David, the presidential re-

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treat, with no staff, advisers, or friends. For someone as gregarious as Bush, this was highly unusual. "We all expected to get called up to Camp David at any minute," says a senior official. Bush never called.

Bush is probably the last American president to have served in World War II. (I'm assuming Democratic Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, a World War II veteran, won't be elected president.) This is important. The war was the defining experience for Bush. At his graduation from Andover in 1942, Secretary of War Henry Stimson spoke about America's global mission. "He observed how the American soldier should be brave without being brutal, self-reliant without boasting, becoming a part of irresistible might without losing faith in individual liberty," Bush recalled in 1989. "I never forgot those words." Soon after graduation, Bush joined the Navy. Now he sees Iraq's aggression in World War II terms. "Half a century ago, the world had the chance to stop a ruthless aggressor and missed it," he said two weeks after the Iraqi invasion. "I pledge to you: we will not make that mistake again."

The president, says another aide, "is totally into World War II analogies." In conversations he constantly refers to the war era, particularly the unsuccessful appeasement of Adolf Hitler in 1939. Associates have fueled his interest by sending him books. Last summer Peter Teeley, Bush's former press secretary, gave him a copy of Martin Gilbert's history of World War II. Bush has read most of it (he leaves it on Air Force One and reads during trips). In December he read *Airman*, which is about World War II pilots (he also read a book on Texas high school football and one by humorist Dave Barry). Scowcroft has slipped Bush still other books on the war period.

From all this, Bush has drawn two conclusions. One is that Saddam is a threat similar to Hitler. "It's a moral issue," he told an aide. "This man has to be stopped." The other is that Bush is a lot better off in domestic politics than either President Franklin Roosevelt or British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was before World War II. Roosevelt, Bush mentioned to an aide, won congressional approval of the draft by only one vote in 1941. In seeking to placate Hitler in 1939, Chamberlain wasn't a bad man—merely wrong. "Everybody said he was a symbol for appeasement, but the whole British hierarchy was for appeasement," Bush said. That's not the case here. Bush thinks the American public supports his willingness to go to war, if necessary. He's right.

Oddly enough, the emir of Kuwait contributed to Bush's belief in a moral crusade against Saddam. When the emir came to the Oval Office on September 28, Bush peppered him with personal questions, hoping to put the emir at ease. Where were you when Iraq invaded? How'd you get out? Did you have a plane waiting on the runway? The emir relaxed and began to tell of the murder and torture of his relatives and other Kuwaitis. It was the first Bush had heard, for instance, of babies being thrown out of incubators. Later Bush got intelligence reports about two Kuwaiti youngsters arrested for passing out leaflets, dragged home to their parents, then shot to death. Another story passed on to Bush (but never fully confirmed) told of a father taking two sick children to the hospital. Barred by Iraqi soldiers, the father was insistent. "I'll take care of them for you," a soldier said, and shot the kids.

Inside the administration, Bush is the hardest of hard-liners, followed closely by Scowcroft and Vice President Dan Quayle. When Bush hears a tough-sounding line, he grabs it eagerly. In his radio address to the nation on January 5, he repeated a passage used by Quayle in talking to American troops in Saudi Arabia five days earlier. The line: "1990 saw Iraq invade and occupy Kuwait. 1991 will see Iraq withdraw, preferably by choice, by force if need be." Bush's aim is to come off as firm, but not macho. He balked at Frost's suggestion that in the Gulf crisis he's being "tested by real fire." At a pre-Christmas session with congressional Republicans, Bush said matter-of-factly that "Saddam doesn't realize that if he doesn't get out, we're going to kick his ass out." When word of this comment got out, it seemed as if Bush was personally threatening Saddam. Not so, says Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater, who sat in on the meeting. "It wasn't macho talk," he insists. In fact, Bush has imposed a no-anecdotes rule on the White House. No tales of presidential fortitude are supposed to be leaked until the crisis has passed.

But a tale of a White House speechwriter, Curt Smith, who defended Bush's stand against Iraq at a Washington party did leak. The party was at the home of Mary McGrory, the *Washington Post* columnist. Democratic Senator Dale Bumpers of Arkansas criticized Bush for being "impulsive" and hurtling the country into war. Smith got up from playing the piano and confronted Bumpers. When Bush read about this in *The Washington Times*, he called Smith, a White House official said. You made my Christmas, Bush told him. ●

THE PRESS

EMBARGOED

By Charles Babington

On November 9 *The Wall Street Journal* published what was widely seen as a solid, page-one scoop: Martin Luther King had plagiarized parts of his doctoral dissertation. The next day the rest of the press followed with front-page stories, crediting the *Journal* for the news. What they didn't reveal was that many of them had had the story themselves—a story that had been widely rumored, and easily available, for a year—and not printed it. *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Atlanta Journal/Constitution*, and THE NEW REPUBLIC had all failed to

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run articles even though at least one editor at each journal knew of the King story last spring, and three right-wing journals had already published it.

The story begins on December 3, 1989—eleven months before *The Wall Street Journal*'s coup. *The Sunday Telegraph* of London carried an article headlined: "Martin Luther King—was he a plagiarist?" The column, by Frank Johnson under the pen name Mandrake, said, "Researchers in his native Georgia must soon decide whether to reveal that the late Dr. King . . . was, in addition to his other human failings, a plagiarist." The column even identified the smoking gun—the dissertation of fellow Boston University student Jack Boozer, from whom King lifted large passages verbatim. Mandrake quoted Ralph Luker of Atlanta, top assistant to Clayborne Carson, the Stanford historian chosen by Coretta Scott King to direct the King Papers Project. Luker virtually confirmed the allegations with his painstaking efforts to sidestep all questions about plagiarism. As a final goad, Mandrake wrote, "The story has not yet been published in the United States." Johnson says he got the King plagiarism story from a British professor who had visited the United States, and that he's not surprised the U.S. press ignored his article. "American reporters' powers of perception tend to fail them on questions of race, gender, gays," he told me.

Articles in *The Sunday Telegraph* (circulation 585,000) are available through Nexis, the computer database service used by many U.S. news organizations and businesses. Any reporter who heard the talk of King's plagiarism in early 1990 could have had Mandrake's road map in minutes by asking Nexis for articles containing the words "Martin Luther King" and "plagiarism." From there, a visit to Boston University's library—which contains both Boozer's and King's dissertations—would have provided the information for the story.

On January 22, 1990, *The Spotlight*, the Liberty Lobby's organ, which claims a circulation of 100,000, carried a front-page story: "King Stole PhD Thesis, According to Evidence." The article, next to an item on "QUEER legislation" and an ad for a $5 cassette on "Alcohol, the Devil's A Bomb," rehashed the Mandrake column. It also included its own interview with Luker, who again refused to confirm or deny the plagiarism charge.

From March 1 to 3 about fifty members of the Southern Intellectual History Circle met in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. "It was very clear that the story [of King's plagiarism] was in the academic cocktail-party gossip network by then," says Luker, who attended. One conferee was University of North Carolina sociologist John Shelton Reed, and he soon began drafting his monthly column for *Chronicles*, the magazine of the conservative Rockford Institute in Illinois. He cited the *Telegraph* story, and the gossip in American academia. So widespread is the talk, he continued, "I presume that by the time this letter sees print I won't be telling you anything you don't know."

But Reed balked at publishing. He was surprised the U.S. press still had not written about the plagiarism as his June publication date neared, and says he didn't care to see headlines saying, "Reed alleges King plagiarism." In his proposed column Reed called on BU to replace King's Ph.D. with an honorary doctorate. As a courtesy, he mailed a copy to the university's interim president, Jon Westling. Westling responded with "a stern letter" insisting that the allegations were totally false, Reed says. At the last minute Reed withdrew his column. (As late as October Westling wrote *Chronicles* saying King's "dissertation has, in fact, been scrupulously examined and re-examined by scholars. . . . Not a single instance of plagiarism of any sort has been identified.")

In September, peeved by his columnist's fickleness, *Chronicles* editor Thomas Fleming wrote an article saying, "King, it has been recently revealed, apparently plagiarized his Boston University doctoral dissertation." Meanwhile, *Chronicles* reporter Ted Pappas obtained copies of the King and Boozer dissertations, located extensive examples of King's filching, and laid them out in an article. It ran in January's issue, which, he says, "we had already put together" when *The Wall Street Journal* article appeared.

By mid-1990 Clayborne Carson realized that talk of the plagiarism—which he had known about since late 1987—was seeping out. He held a handful of reporters at bay by misleading them about the extent of the problem. Scholars and government officials, meanwhile, agreed to remain silent. In early 1990 Carson's team told its main underwriter, the National Endowment for the Humanities, of the plagiarism. (Lynne Cheney and fellow officials were not obligated to divulge the information, NEH spokesmen say. And they didn't.) The previous October Carson had described his discoveries to Mrs. King and the project's board of directors. They agreed he should include the findings in a scholarly article for the quarterly *Journal of American History*, to be published in December 1990. The *Journal*, however, rejected his first draft in a dispute over how to address the plagiarism matter. Carson and his colleagues began revising the piece for a mid-1991 issue. Meanwhile, word of the plagiarism was leaking from Atlanta-based scholars and former students who had worked on the King Papers Project team housed at Emory University. That group, unlike Carson's Stanford-based contingent, had the Boozer dissertation, which is why press attention came to focus on the borrowing from Boozer. In fact, Carson says, King's greatest source of plagiarized material came from the theologian Paul Tillich.

The first U.S. reporter to approach Carson with questions about plagiarism was *The Washington Post*'s Dan Balz. Balz says he interviewed Carson last spring and received "a less alarmist view of what they had" about the plagiarism. Balz, unaware of the Mandrake column, knew nothing of Boozer. He says the *Post* did a database search, but asked for information about the King Papers Project rather than "King" and "plagiarism." Balz says Carson told him, "Once we've got all the evidence assembled, you can come out and look at it and draw your own conclusions." Balz agreed, after obtaining

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what he thought was Carson's promise to alert him if other reporters came snooping around. Through the summer and early fall, Carson kept telling Balz that his researchers needed more time. When I asked Carson if he had led Balz to believe there was less to the plagiarism story than there really was, he replied: "Definitely. I don't apologize for the fact I tried to play it down. . . . I wasn't about to break the story to someone who just asked" about King's plagiarism in general terms.

By autumn Carson got a call from Peter Waldman, the Atlanta-based *Wall Street Journal* reporter who eventually got the scoop. At first Carson did his usual stone-walling. "I told him the same thing—no big deal, don't call us, we'll call you," Carson says. But a few weeks later Waldman called him back to tell him he had the Boozer dissertation. According to Carson, Waldman said, "We'll go to press with or without you." Carson cooperated.

What had happened at the *Post*? Despite the paper's troubled relations with black readers, Balz and deputy managing editor Robert Kaiser say the paper didn't deliberately drag its feet on the King story. Kaiser says the paper exercised normal caution "because of the problem of besmirching people's reputations on the basis of hearsay." The *Post*'s ombudsman, Richard Harwood, agrees, but adds: "I suspect that we pursue more rapidly and vigorously things about some people than we do about other people."

The Atlanta Journal/Constitution has no one to blame but itself. Frances Schwartzkopff, a rookie suburban reporter, picked up the plagiarism rumor last spring from the same source that Waldman did—a former Emory student who had worked on the King editing project. Hesitating at first out of concern for the source, she says, "I told my editors after a month or so." That triggered a debate about who should handle the story, how to pursue it, etc. It's unclear exactly what happened, but the reporter finally assigned to the story knew nothing of Schwartzkopff's information (including the Boozer connection) and started reporting from scratch.

The New York Times was even more hapless. An editor for the paper's book review section learned of the King plagiarism from a prominent historian, who swore the editor to secrecy in early 1990. Rebecca Sinkler, editor of the *Times*'s *Book Review*, says the paper has a strict policy of telling the news staff about newsworthy tips. "I certainly never heard diddly about this," she says. When I asked Anthony DePalma, the *Times* reporter who followed up *The Wall Street Journal*'s scoop, about reports that a book review sub-editor had sat on the story, he said he'd heard the same story, and tried to learn the editor's identity, to no avail.

At THE NEW REPUBLIC, literary editor Leon Wieseltier learned of the King plagiarism last spring from Eugene Genovese, a historian now living in Atlanta. "I thought it was a story that was going to stir people, and could easily be put to all sorts of unpleasant purposes," Wieseltier says. So the magazine's editors "decided early on—I think correctly, since this was a story about ideas and texts—that it would require a certain amount of scholarly skill" from the writer. The magazine approached several historians, all of whom took some time to consider, and decline, the assignment. But sentimentality and "correct politics" inhibited the editors from vigorously pursuing the story. In retrospect, says Martin Peretz, TNR's editor in chief, the magazine reacted too gingerly because of the story's racial overtones. "Everybody suddenly got palsied," he says.

Carson, who was less than forthcoming until *The Wall Street Journal* got the goods, can take some pride in his buying of time before the plagiarism story broke. "Looking back," he says, "it might have been naive to think it would wait for the scholarly process to work. But it almost worked."

CHARLES BABINGTON is the Washington correspondent for *The News and Observer* of Raleigh, North Carolina.

A report from the Gulf.

SAND IN OUR FACE

By Morton Kondracke

RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

Though dressed modestly in civilian clothes, her arms and head covered, a U.S. Navy lieutenant was stopped in a Riyadh market by a member of the Saudi Religious Police, the Mutawa, berated for not having her face veiled, and hit with a stick. When she protested that she was an American servicewoman, the policeman scolded her in English for having violated Saudi morality, and might have hit her again if she hadn't ducked into a store and phoned for help.

This incident makes an American wonder whether Saudi Arabia is a country worth going to war for, but actually it represents a condition that may push the Bush administration into early combat. Lately Islamic militants have been on a tear against secularism, modernism, and immorality, going so far as to violate ancient custom by raiding private homes and diplomatic residences to seize liquor and arrest party-goers. Those imprisoned include one of King Fahd's close friends, and his translator. The Mutawa has taken to stopping cars and demanding that male and female occupants prove they are married.

More seriously, militant clerics have been passing around cassette tapes among the country's benighted masses that lash the government for inviting U.S. troops into the country, site of Islam's holy sites. They accuse the United States of plotting to occupy Saudi Arabia permanently, and even of drawing Saddam Hussein into Kuwait to provide an excuse for U.S. occupation. The clerics are implicitly questioning the legitimacy of the Saudi

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royal family, charged as it is with protection of the holy places from foreign defilement. An Interior Ministry official told me that extremist preachers are often "brought in, talked to, and released." But the ministry (which fronts the Mutawa) clearly is afraid of the religious movement, and is unwilling to crack down. "We don't want any martyrs," said the man from Interior.

The ultraconservative royal family also is afraid of the militants. It formally outlawed the driving of cars by women to contain the fundamentalist backlash against women who had protested the informal ban. Especially scared are members of Saudi Arabia's tiny modernist elite, who fear personal harassment from religious vigilantes and the fanatics' incitement of the masses against possible moves toward democracy, liberalized social customs, and international moderation.

This split in Saudi society is important for U.S. strategy against Saddam because, almost unanimously, Saudi Arabia's top leaders are telling visiting Americans (and the administration) that they want the United States to go to war against Iraq soon (preferably on January 16 or 17), get rid of Saddam quickly, and then get our troops out of here.

This is by no means a unanimous view in the country. Many important business leaders and even some government ministers favor waiting for sanctions to work and cutting face-saving deals with Saddam. But they don't speak out publicly and have no influence on foreign policy. The Bush administration is listening to King Fahd and his closest advisers. So it thinks that Saudi society couldn't stand the strain of a prolonged presence of hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops. According to a high-ranking Saudi diplomat, "The costs of an extended waiting period will be exorbitant, and the danger of civil violence and turmoil in this region is going to be significant." The U.S. Embassy has reportedly been telling members of Congress that if the Gulf crisis drags on much beyond March, the Saudis may begin thinking about deals of their own with Saddam.

To be sure, domestic social strains are not the foremost reason the Saudis want an early and decisive war. They're terrified of Saddam's ruthlessness, his drive for nuclear weapons, and his desire to dominate the Gulf and use its (that is, *their*) oil riches to make his regime into a global superpower. They want the threat eliminated quickly because they fear that delay will lead to no action at all, which will be tantamount to an Iraqi victory. "Saddam is sure there won't be a war," said a top Saudi diplomat educated in the U.S. Saddam thinks "the Bush administration wants to fight, but will be restrained by domestic politics." The diplomat paused and added: "Is he right?" Another diplomat says he wonders from watching Gulf debates on CNN "whether Washington is on the same planet as we are. What's happened here is that a group of murderous rapists has attacked one hotel on a strip and are planning to go on to others. The police have arrived with guns drawn, but instead of shooting, occasionally someone goes in and has tea with the rapists, and in the police station a discussion is under way about maybe bringing the rapists to heel by cutting off their salaries."

The Saudis are especially outraged by accusations from members of Congress that they are not doing enough to pay for their own protection, and that they are going to reap $40 billion in oil revenue windfalls from the crisis. In fact, administration officials say, increases in oil prices will net the Saudis $14 billion for 1990, while costs to the regime in aid, defraying allies' expenses, increased oil production costs, and Saudi military outlays will come to $32 billion. These officials say it was $5 billion in Saudi and other Gulf states' aid to the Soviets, as much as U.S. persuasion, that permitted the worldwide coalition against Saddam to form.

Money is another reason the Saudis want a fast war. The longer the standoff lasts, the more it will cost in support for visiting troops, aid to poor countries, and housing for 350,000 Kuwaiti refugees. Rich as they are, the Saudis face a budget deficit of $15 billion this year, the eventual prospect of lower revenues when oil prices finally drop, and huge expenses to rebuild Kuwait.

In terms of potential loss of soldiers' lives, of course, the Saudis are contributing nothing compared with the United States. Saudi pilots will take full part in air operations in a war, but the Saudi army of 40,000 probably will not be bloodied unless Iraqi forces invade. The Saudis are not instituting a draft to make their own young men share in protecting the kingdom. As one American said, "The Saudis are used to buying the best, and now they are buying the best in military protection." It's not that they aren't grateful; from princes on down, they say they are. They just want the United States to get on with the job.

Most Saudi leaders are so eager for war that they minimize the risks and magnify the benefits. All the allies have to do, they say, is drop some bombs on Saddam's command and control system (or on him), and the decapitated Iraqi army will collapse overnight. There is no danger, they say, that an attack on Iraq will cause an explosion throughout the Arab world. "If there is unrest," said one Saudi prince, "we will handle it."

And after the war, some Gulf Arabs promised, there can be a "new Arab political and economic order," a moderate alliance of Egypt and Saudi Arabia that will spread wealth, tame Syria, and lead the way toward a peace settlement with Israel—possibly without the discredited PLO or an independent Palestinian state. Meanwhile Saudi Arabia will democratize and liberalize over time so that one day women will be able to drive cars, and the country's lavish, 600-seat Consultative Assembly Building will no longer stand empty.

And the desert may become a fertile region for tulips. The likely reality is that social progress in Saudi Arabia will move at a snail's pace because of resistance by the militant religious fanatics and fear in the regime that pushing reform from the top will lead to disaster, as it did for the Shah in Iran. The royal family doesn't seem interested in being a constitutional monarchy: its members say that Western democracy is contrary to Islam. And though officials say it is time for peace with Israel, the terms are likely to involve Israel's giving up

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Jerusalem as its capital, an impossible demand.

The Saudis have this much right: the main emphasis of the war ought to be on air power, not ground combat. Air-war proponents here and in Washington, including Saudi and U.S. Air Force generals, say that close-formation B-52 carpet bombing like the "arclight" operations of the Vietnam War could wreak devastation on Iraqi troops, perhaps destroying half of Saddam's forces. Air Force officers say that there never has been a war more winnable by air than this one, that air superiority over Iraq could be secured in a day or two, supply lines could be cut, and the Iraqi army starved.

The problem is that the top command of the U.S. military, dominated by the Army, seems to be planning for a bloody, costly ground invasion against the Iraqi forces in Kuwait, which could result in as many as 10,000 U.S. casualties, a Pentagon official has estimated. At the joint Saudi-U.S. command center here, a U.S. infantry two-star general said, "In my experience, you've got to go in and shoot the enemy yourself." Army dogma is that wars are only won on the ground, and those in charge of the U.S. military—General Colin Powell in Washington, General Norman Schwarzkopf here—are Army. A war with Iraq, and soon, probably is in America's interest, as well as Saudi Arabia's, but disaster looms if the Army brass convinces President Bush to fight it the Army way. ●

Moral ambiguities in the Gulf crisis.

PERPLEXED

By Michael Walzer

Why are so many people, myself among them, so confused about the confrontation in the Gulf? The confusion is particularly obvious on what might be called the near left of the political spectrum, where people were not confused at all in the Vietnam years. Editorials in *The New York Times* (more stridently in *The Nation*) urging that war be avoided, and in THE NEW REPUBLIC urging that war be embraced, aim at persuading these people to take a stand. But I sense a stubborn reluctance—almost as if they believe that the right response this time is radical uncertainty. And how defensible is that, when the moment of decision draws ever nearer?

Among Americans in general there is a considerable, and more surprising, reluctance to go to war. Here the reluctance is fueled by the belief that this would be a war about oil and money, a dirty war, not worth human, or at least American, life. This seems to me a mistaken belief. The nations most in need of oil from the Gulf would rather deal than fight, confident that the market will prevail over Iraqi ambition and, if there is any such thing, Iraqi ideology. The United States, so far as its economic interests go, has little to fear from a deal that "rewards" Saddam Hussein's aggression. I sometimes admire the saving cynicism of Americans with regard to politics: it has a useful deflationary effect on the many varieties of hypocritical zeal. But it isn't admirable in this case, where all the "dirty"—that is, material—arguments point toward appeasement, not war.

What makes for confusion on the near left is precisely that this would be a clean war, so obviously just that one wants to see it fought. And yet the consequences of fighting it are so uncertain that one hesitates to begin. The Vietnamese case was very different. There the war was reasonably contained and unlikely, except by our own actions, to expand beyond its territorial limits. But we were fighting *in* Vietnam and supposedly *for* Vietnam *against* what increasingly seemed to be the greater number of the Vietnamese people. That was an unjust war. Here, by contrast, we would be fighting against the Iraqi state and its leader for the sake of another country's political survival. From the standpoint of morality, it is hard to imagine a better cause or a more appropriate enemy. By contrast again, however, it isn't at all clear what the limits of this war would be. Another comparison: the American invasion of Panama was, I think, unjust, but (except for the inhabitants of a few neighborhoods in Panama City) it was not dangerous at all. An attack on Iraq would be just but dangerous.

I will consider first the justness, then the dangers. To resist aggression on one's own behalf and to come to the aid of a victim of aggression: these are the classic just causes of warfare, good reasons for deciding to fight. The aggressor, as Clausewitz wrote, is a man of peace; he wants nothing more than to march into a neighboring country unresisted. It is the victim and the victim's friends who must choose to fight. Most of us believe that aggression should be resisted and its victims rescued, whenever this is humanly possible. Of course, we have learned to accommodate overwhelming power; we don't rush to the aid of victims like the Hungarians in 1956, when fighting would raise the specter of global destruction. In general, however, it is a good thing to resist. This argument has a further consequence: it is very bad to make a deal with an aggressor at the expense of his victim. For we then make ourselves complicitous in the aggression—and in all further aggressive behavior that our action encourages, as the British and French were complicitous in the conquest of Czechoslovakia after Munich.

I have purposely used the simplest moral language ("good," "bad"), because these are fairly straightforward judgments. For some people they are made more complicated by the fact that the victim state in this case is so unattractive politically. But the feudal autocracy of Kuwait is irrelevant here. Autocracy should be overthrown, no doubt, but by the Kuwaitis, not the Iraqis. And aggression is always an attack on the status quo. When we resist,

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we don't endorse the status quo; we only require that it be changed by other means and by different people.

Our judgments are also complicated by the fact that the aggressor state in this case is so threatening militarily. Isn't the conquest of Kuwait merely a pretext for a preventive war against Iraq's present and future capacity for chemical, bacteriological, and nuclear attack? But U.S. leaders were not looking for pretexts before the conquest, and they seem to be saying now that a full Iraqi withdrawal would be a positive reason *not* to attack. Preventive war is never a simple issue. A country like Israel, which has been publicly threatened with gas attack and which is formally at war with Iraq, might well make a different judgment here. But the American case is clear: if we fight to liberate Kuwait, we will aim to destroy the arsenal of the aggressor. If not, we will have to deal with the arsenal by other means.

Why not deal with the aggression by other means? A number of Catholic bishops, invoking just war theory, have insisted that the moral argument doesn't end with the fact of aggression. We must ask whether there are any means short of war for defeating the aggressor and whether the defeat can be inflicted at costs proportional to the values under attack. Unfortunately, neither just war theory nor any other perspective in moral philosophy helps much in answering these questions. Political or military judgment is called for, and here theologians and philosophers have no special expertise.

War as a "last resort" is an endlessly receding possibility, invoked mostly by people who would prefer never to resist aggression with force. After all, there is always something else to do, another diplomatic note, another meeting. In the present case, waiting out the embargo is a permanent possibility: When does lastness come? In fact, however, politics and war commonly work on timetables, which are often interconnected. Our embargo of Iraq is not a conventional siege, which goes on and on until mass starvation forces surrender. We are committed (as we should be) to letting food and medical supplies through well before people start dying. The embargo is aimed above all at Iraq's military-industrial capacity. But Saddam can let this capacity run down indefinitely so long as he is sure that he won't be attacked. Hence the effectiveness of the embargo depends on a credible threat to fight, and (for logistical, not moral reasons) this threat can only be sustained for a time. At some point Saddam must yield or we must fight. If he doesn't yield and we don't fight, the victory will be his; there won't be a further "last resort." We can postpone that moment of decision beyond January 15; but some timetable there must be. The alternative is to make a deal now, but such is the force of the argument against aggression that even people who want to do that cannot say so out loud.

Proportionality is also an issue that moral argument reaches only in a gross way. No one would choose a war that brought millions or even hundreds of thousands of deaths or that threatened the world with nuclear destruction—merely for the sake of Kuwaiti independence. And a war cheap in human life would be welcomed by many Americans who oppose the war they think is coming. Stanley Hoffmann, in the best argument against fighting that I have read, says that "a war would be a good precedent for the future of collective security if it could be quick, easy, and lead to the kind of peace that chastises [without utterly destroying] the aggressor country. . . ." (*New York Review of Books*, January 17). Proportionality inserts itself, as it were, between these two possibilities, vast destruction and cheap victory. But once inserted, I don't know how it is calculated. Suppose the bishops were told that the most sober estimate of casualties is 20,000 on each side. Would they insist that that figure is disproportionate to the values at stake? And if the figure is 10,000 or 5,000, would that be proportionate? How would they, or we, possibly know? Proportionality is a mathematical relation, but values like a country's independence or the defeat of aggression cannot be expressed mathematically. They will always lose out to the body count, though there are times when, if we are to preserve any decency at all, we must be prepared to count (and discount) human bodies.

All this sounds like an argument for war, and yet I feel little confidence in the argument and no readiness to join in shouting, "Let's fight." There are a lot of good reasons to be afraid of fighting. The Middle East is a terribly volatile place in which to start a war: Who can say how far the violence will extend? Modern military technology is massive and unpredictable in its effects: How many of the targets that we aim at will we manage to hit? How many homes, schools, hospitals will we hit without aiming at them? The U.S. Army and Air Force are pretty much untested: How effectively will they fight? A "quick and easy" war would be a war fought mainly through the air, but is that feasible? Would it even be tried? A ground attack that became bogged down, even for a month or two, might represent a "moral" victory for Saddam Hussein (more so than a diplomatic deal)—and with what consequences throughout the Arab world? Could Iraq carry the war to Israel, and then to the streets of Amman and Cairo?

I don't think these worries express a specifically moral anxiety. Perhaps they only express a lack of moral courage. They can each be answered, with varying degrees of probability. Given a certain set of answers, I would support an American attack. In any case, I am not prepared to join an anti-war movement modeled on that of the Vietnam years, whose protagonists claim that a war against Iraq would be unjust. It might well be politically or militarily unwise, but that is not a matter for marching.

Once the moral and prudential arguments are worked through, as best they can be, a decision must be made. By the time this article appears, readers may be talking about that decision in the past tense. It doesn't seem likely that it will have been made democratically. Neither the people nor their representatives will have been systematically consulted. But it is another feature of the confusion of the near left, which favors demo-

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cratic decision-making, that it is very difficult for us to say what form such consultations should take.

Suppose the only way to defeat aggression without actually fighting is to threaten to fight. Can a working democracy make and sustain a threat of that sort? One can't play poker by committee, certainly not if the committee holds public meetings. And if Congress is asked to approve a war once the threat has failed, what choice does it really have? We are, it seems, in the hands of our leaders; our situation is not entirely different from that of the people of Iraq, except that our leaders must stand for re-election. They will be condemned if they fail to oppose Iraqi aggression—and also if military opposition brings new catastrophes.

The real test of American democracy will come if Saddam Hussein backs down. This will represent a considerable but also an incomplete moral and political victory. The aggression will have been turned back but the military capacity of the aggressor will not have been reduced. Then we will have to find some way to force an Iraqi demobilization or at least to prevent any technological enhancement of Iraq's military strength. Such a policy will have costs, and there will be plenty of time for Congress to talk about them. Those Americans who oppose a hot war in the Gulf will have to decide whether they have the stomach for a cold war. That too would be a just war, free from our current anxieties. But it will be hard, and it will make for tense relationships with many of our allies. Whatever happens after January 15, democratic states—not ours alone—still face the difficult task of containing and disarming potential aggressors. ●

WASHINGTON SCENE

A STRAUSS WALTZ

By Jacob Weisberg

At the height of the 1980s gold rush, TNR's James K. Glassman noted: "One of the best ways to make money is to be standing around when large sums of cash are changing hands." During the boom years investment bankers at firms like Goldman, Sachs, and Drexel Burnham Lambert were the masters of this art, earning stratospheric fees by raking a half percent or so off the top of ten-figure deals. This made merger and acquisition specialists the envy of their counterparts at law firms, who continued, quaintly, to charge clients for "billable hours."

By 1990 investment bankers had fallen upon hard times. But a new parasite caste was waiting to take their place. When MCA, the Hollywood entertainment conglomerate, passed to Matsushita, the Japanese electronics giant, for $6.6 billion late last year, Washington fixers were standing around next to the bankers. This time the lobbyists left the table with the biggest crumbs.

Robert Strauss, former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, and U.S. Trade Representative under President Carter, stood around in a number of capacities. He was there as a member of MCA's board of directors. He was there as MCA's Washington lawyer and lobbyist, which earned his firm, Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, a fee of $8 million. He was there too, "by special arrangement," as a Washington representative for Matsushita, which paid him an undisclosed, enormous sum. As Strauss put it in one interview, "I don't work by the hour anymore. I don't do windows." He added that his $8 million fee was "on the low side."

Strauss was not the only one standing around during the deal. Howard H. Baker Jr., the former Senate majority leader and Reagan chief of staff, was also in attendance as an MCA board member and lawyer-lobbyist, services for which he was paid a $1.6 million retainer. So were Jody Powell, Carter's White House press secretary, whose firm did p.r. work for both companies, and Anne Wexler, Carter's director of public liaison, who, like Baker and Strauss, declined to comment on her role. The roster of Carter heavies belies the notion that Michael Deaver and Lyn Nofziger were the first White House parolees to think of putting their "access" up for sale.

In a breathless front-page article *The Washington Post* asserted that this "elite corps of middlemen, lawyers, and public relations mavens" was responsible for guiding the deal past regulators, legislators, press, and public. "Lobbyists' Clout Helped Deliver MCA to Japanese," the headline had it. This, of course, is what those who make their livings as power brokers want their clients and potential clients to believe. But those with more intimate knowledge of the deal think the hype was richly unearned. "If they weren't there," says David Geffen, an MCA principal who made $710 million on the sale, "I think the deal would have gone down just as smoothly." Geffen calls the Washington crew "superfluous." Based on his version of events, a better *Post* headline might have been: "Lobbyists Convince Hollywood and Tokyo Their Clout Essential to Deal."

If Strauss et al. have any one person to thank for their piece of the action, it is Lew Wasserman, the 77-year-old mogul who chairs MCA. Wasserman has been an avid cultivator of politicians since the 1950s: MCA's political action committee is Hollywood's largest, doling out about $250,000 per election cycle to candidates of both parties. Wasserman, a reputed liberal, was an early backer of Carter in 1976, but in 1980 took the precaution of helping his former client Ronald Reagan as well. The hedge paid off in 1983, when the president took Wasserman's side against a proposed Federal Communications Commission rule change that would have allowed TV networks to own their own programming.

Wasserman's approach is to assemble political back-

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ing the way he lines up talent as a Hollywood agent. It was Wasserman who put Strauss on MCA's board of directors in 1982. And when Baker, who plays "Mr. Republican" to Strauss's "Mr. Democrat," left the White House to become an elder statesman in 1989, Wasserman made sure there was a spot on the board for him too. As Ronald Brownstein notes in his new book, *The Power and the Glitter*, the two were widely viewed as part of an insurance policy against a hostile takeover of MCA. It now appears that they were on hand as security for the event that was to be the capstone of Wasserman's 54-year career: the sale of the company he raised from infancy. When Mike Ovitz, the chairman of Creative Artists Agency, who is credited with brokering the deal, came to Wasserman with Matsushita's opening bid, the first concern MCA executives raised, according to a *Los Angeles Times* account, was that they had not yet "positioned" themselves in D.C. Wasserman and his colleagues moved quickly to sign a limo-load of East Coast co-producers.

Where Hollywood views Washington fixers as magicians who can make deals happen, Tokyo sees them simply as government officials turned traitor, who have power and sell it by the yard. A recent study by the Center for Public Integrity tends to support the Japanese view, showing that since 1974 nearly half the former senior staff for the U.S. Trade Representative, or their present firms, have registered with the Justice Department as foreign agents. The revolving door from the USTR to representing Japanese companies makes the sprint from the Pentagon's procurement office to its leading contractors look leisurely. Strauss's case is emblematic. It was at USTR that Strauss got to know Keiya Toyonaga of Matsushita, which led to Akin Gump representing the company.

What, it must be asked, did the phalanx of expensive fixers actually do? "In terms of lobbying," one of the MCA helpers told me, "there wasn't a lot of it to do." The principal task, according to several participants, was to make sure that no one would block the deal. To this end, Powell and his partners drew up press releases and information sheets, which were distributed widely the day the deal was announced. Akin Gump attorneys sent packets to officials of the Commerce Department and the National Security Council, and to congressmen on relevant committees. Wexler sent information to unions she thought might be alarmed.

According to documents filed with the SEC, Strauss's role was to act for both companies in "government relations." He was specifically not to represent either of them in "negotiation or financing." According to my sources, however, Strauss's role was exactly the opposite. He helped to negotiate the deal, and as a matter of policy does not do lobbying any more than he does windows. Strauss did not communicate with anyone on Capitol Hill about the deal. And his only direct contact with the executive branch was on November 13, when he and Baker visited Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan Jr., to avert a potential conflict over the National Parks concession owned by MCA.

Baker and Strauss believe that this visit does not qualify as lobbying for purposes of the Foreign Agents Registration Act. On January 3, several of Baker's law partners registered with the Justice Department as agents for Matsushita, citing their efforts at Interior. But Baker himself did not register. And neither Strauss nor any of his partners have filed information about their Interior contacts. Strauss maintains that he does not have to register because the visit to Lujan was not an effort to lobby, but an "informational" meeting. And if it was lobbying, he asserts, arguing in the alternative, he still doesn't have to register because the meeting took place on November 13, some days before he was formally retained by Matsushita.

Whatever it was, it backfired. At the meeting with Strauss and Baker, Lujan asked that Matsushita donate the MCA-owned concession, valued at about $100 million, to the Park Service. Strauss and Baker said that would be impossible, but offered to place Curry Company, which owns the parks concession, into an escrow account until a buyer could be found, and to donate its profits to the National Park Foundation. Lujan agreed, but changed his mind after the hyperbolic *Post* story appeared suggesting that he was buffaloed by Baker and Strauss.

The lobbyists appear to have been more successful on Capitol Hill. Unlike the Sony buyout of Columbia, which was greeted by an outcry from economic nationalists in Congress, the much bigger Matsushita-MCA deal was met mostly with silence. More Strauss lobbying? Those predisposed to protest, like John Dingell, Mel Levine, and Howard Wolpe, did receive packets and pre-emptive phone calls from Strauss's firm. But the more likely cause of the hush is that the deal was announced when Congress was in recess, with the looming Gulf war and the budget occupying center stage. And not all kept mum. A call from Strauss partner Joel Jankowsky to Richard Gephardt's office didn't stop the House majority leader from fretting about the deal in a speech to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Would anything have happened differently if the lobbyists had not been on board? The truth is, not much. At most, the interior secretary might not have bloviated quite so angrily about the menace of foreigners selling T-shirts at Yosemite. But that's about it.

Strauss is therefore caught in a delicate balancing act. On the one hand, he wants to convince clients that he's a deeply influential behind-scenes fixer with the clout to make things not happen. On the other, he needs to convince the Justice Department and the public that he doesn't use his leverage on behalf of private or foreign interests. It's hard to say which is more odious, to peddle influence, or to peddle the illusion of influence.

Nice little transaction, the Washington fixer of today says to the Japanese businessman. Shame if anything should happen to it. And with his help—surprise—nothing does. ●

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Why so few are still madly for Bradley.

BILL FOLDS

By John B. Judis

A year ago Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey was high on every Democrat's list of presidential prospects. In one poll of Democratic state chairs the former Princeton All-American, Rhodes scholar, and New York Knick star forward got almost twice as many votes as the runner-up, New York Governor Mario Cuomo. And there seemed good reason to tout Bradley for president. In championing the ideas that led to the 1986 tax reform, he had achieved that most valuable and elusive of senatorial commodities: respect. He was credited with sounding the tocsin on Third World debt and the weakness of the Soviet economy. He defied political stereotypes—a sure vote for the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, but also (with nuances) a supporter of the Nicaraguan contras. He was perhaps the only politician whom both the left-wing Americans for Democratic Action and the moderate Democratic Leadership Council could be comfortable with.

What a difference a year makes. In March Bradley mysteriously declared he couldn't "conceive of any circumstances" in which he would run for president in 1992. The statement—seemingly unprovoked by any political exigency—left a slight loophole (circumstances could arise that he had not conceived of), yet clearly signaled his hesitation to run. Then came his campaign for reelection. Bradley's opponent, Christine Todd Whitman, had been a minor county official and an appointee to a state utility board. In a summer poll 75 percent of New Jersey voters said they had never heard of her. Outspent by Bradley by twenty-to-one, she could only afford television advertising the last week of the campaign. And she came within 55,000 votes of defeating him.

Before the election, official Washington had tended to discount his statement that he would not run. He was invariably listed high among the contenders. But since his near-defeat, when he is mentioned at all, it is more as an afterthought—the way a fading jump shooter is sometimes named to the all-star team. His poor showing has also humbled him. Bradley, who is more at home between the covers of a thick book on fluctuating exchange rates than in a union hall or television studio, says in an interview that the election "taught me that a politician has to talk about what is on people's minds, that he has to address their real-life concerns."

What happened? Bradley's poor showing against Whitman revealed certain significant, and possibly enduring, political weaknesses. These weaknesses would affect any attempt by Bradley to win the presidency and could, under the wrong circumstances, even make his reelection problematic.

Bradley's staff blamed his poor showing on popular discontent with New Jersey's Democratic governor, Jim Florio. In June Florio had raised sales and income taxes to meet mounting deficits and to pay for an infusion of new funds into low-income school districts. (See "The Taxing Governor," TNR, October 15, 1990.) By August, when Bradley's campaign began in earnest, New Jerseyans were sporting "impeach Florio" buttons and looking for other ways to express their anger at the governor. But the Florio factor only partly explains what happened. More important was the campaign that Bradley ran. If he had set out deliberately to redirect the voters' anger from Florio to himself, he couldn't have done a better job.

First, there was the way he dealt with Florio's tax increase. Asked repeatedly about it, Bradley—the reputed expert on taxes—neither defended nor denounced it. Instead, he dodged it. "I make my comments on the federal level," Bradley responded to a reporter's question. "I am not going to exploit the anger that I feel out there. I am not going to demagogue this issue."

This rationale did not sit well with voters, who were aware that Bradley had campaigned for Florio and that he had commented before on state issues. According to a poll from Rutgers' Eagleton Institute, 76 percent of New Jersey voters wanted to know what Bradley thought about Florio's program. Voters took umbrage not at what they believed Bradley's position to be, but at his unwillingness to take any position, which they saw as a kind of arrogance.

To make matters worse, when Bradley was not stonewalling the tax question, he was running a campaign that was virtually devoid of content. Here, too, Bradley seemed to be patronizing voters. His commercials played up his basketball past—something he had once been reluctant to exploit. In his speeches he trumpeted

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the virtues of New Jersey and the wonders of its shoreline as if he were running for director of the State Tourist Bureau. ("No matter what the crises of the moment, New Jersey places give my life continuity and a sense of permanence. . . .") When pressed about his goals, he spouted term-paper rhetoric about "the unique bond between the people and their representatives."

In election debates in 1978 and 1984, Bradley had held his own. Yet in two of his three debates with Whitman, who had never run for statewide office, he was virtually annihilated. He appeared to be reading from a script written by campaign consultants; she spoke directly to voters. In the first debate Whitman challenged him for supporting campaign finance reform at the same time he was raising $12.5 million, largely out of state, to run against her. He replied with a ponderous and irrelevant story about how his old basketball coach had taught him to practice, because if he wasn't practicing, "someone else will be." "When I ask for trust," he concluded, "I want to be the best-prepared candidate." Bradley had clearly rehearsed this answer, but to a different question. Whitman fired back, "It's funny that the definition of being the best prepared is spending more and more money." According to the Eagleton poll, those who watched or read about the first debate favored Whitman by 38 to 24 percent.

Of course, if the revolt against Florio's tax program had not occurred, Bradley might still seem to be an invulnerable politician. Whitman would have lacked an issue, and the public would have dutifully pulled the lever next to Bradley's name. But the reverse is also true: the presence of an intense political controversy—the first that Bradley has had to face during a campaign—highlighted his flaws as a politician. Two in particular are worth noting.

The election showed the downside of Bradley's legendary cautiousness. Ever since he was a high school student in Crystal City, Missouri, he has had difficulty making major decisions. In his senior year of high school, after committing himself to Duke, he changed his mind the week school was to start and went to Princeton. At Princeton, he had to take an extra week to decide which eating club to join. During his last seasons as a Knick, he kept entertaining one political opportunity after another until he finally decided to run for senator in 1978. And for the last four years he has been painfully deliberating about whether to run for president.

If Bradley's caution has led him to avoid mistakes—like accepting an offer to run for Missouri state treasurer in 1972—it may also have contributed to a failure of political nerve. He has been willing to take positions on neglected but worthy problems—such as expanding the strategic petroleum reserve or reducing Third World debt—and he has not hesitated when he believes a moral principle is at stake, particularly on civil rights issues. But he has tended to proceed very gingerly, to the point of inaction, when faced with less clear-cut issues that he thinks might threaten him politically. Last year he reportedly agonized over his position on a proposed amendment to the Bill of Rights banning flag-burning. At a Washington dinner party he was overheard telling a Democratic pollster that a vote against the amendment might kill him politically. Eventually he decided to vote against it, but not until it was on its way to defeat.

During the fierce debate over the budget, Bradley once again appeared gun-shy, bitterly disappointing Washington Democrats who expected him to exercise leadership on tax issues. His only contribution was a quasi-academic discourse on the "bubble"—arguing correctly but irrelevantly that it was consistent with the provisions of the 1986 bill. Bradley claimed afterward that he was prevented from taking a leading role because he hadn't been part of the summit negotiations, but other Democrats who hadn't been part of the negotiations—including Al Gore, Kent Conrad, and David Boren—figured prominently in the debate.

Bradley's refusal to take a position on Florio's tax increase may have also reflected a failure of nerve. In his statements Bradley subtly implied that he opposed Florio's tax increase ("I am not going to exploit the anger . . ."), but according to one Democrat who participated in a private meeting with Bradley before the public outcry against Florio, Bradley appeared to back the governor's program but was worried that it was "politically risky." He was afraid of becoming an object of the voters' anger.

Bradley's refusal to take a position also showed poor political judgment. Had he partially backed Florio, as victorious representative Ron Andrews did, he would have been better off than he was by saying nothing. Rather than saving his political career, his refusal to discuss Florio's program nearly ended it. One Democratic political consultant summed up Bradley's problem this way: "Bradley used to say about basketball that he didn't have good instincts, he had to practice. But in politics, you get confronted with situations where there is no way to practice. If you don't have good instincts, you lose."

The 1990 Senate election also showed Bradley at his worst in communicating his ideas and feelings to political audiences. But he does not have trouble communicating because of his flat Missouri drawl or an absence of good laugh lines, all of which he has worked on studiously over the last two decades. The problem is that he does not seem interested in many of the issues that move voters. When Bradley talks about voters' mundane concerns, whether jobs or their children's education, his delivery is leaden, his emotions forced, his analysis clichéd. When he talks about what really interests him—for the last three years, the Soviet economy—he becomes animated. His ideas seem fresh rather than stale, his phrases newly minted rather than borrowed from campaign handbooks.

When I interviewed Bradley last year, he told me that his priorities were "kids and the environment"—the current Democratic equivalent of mom and apple pie. He talked about politics and issues in a dutiful manner, but then I asked him why he was making such a fuss about extending credits to the Soviet Union. Was any-

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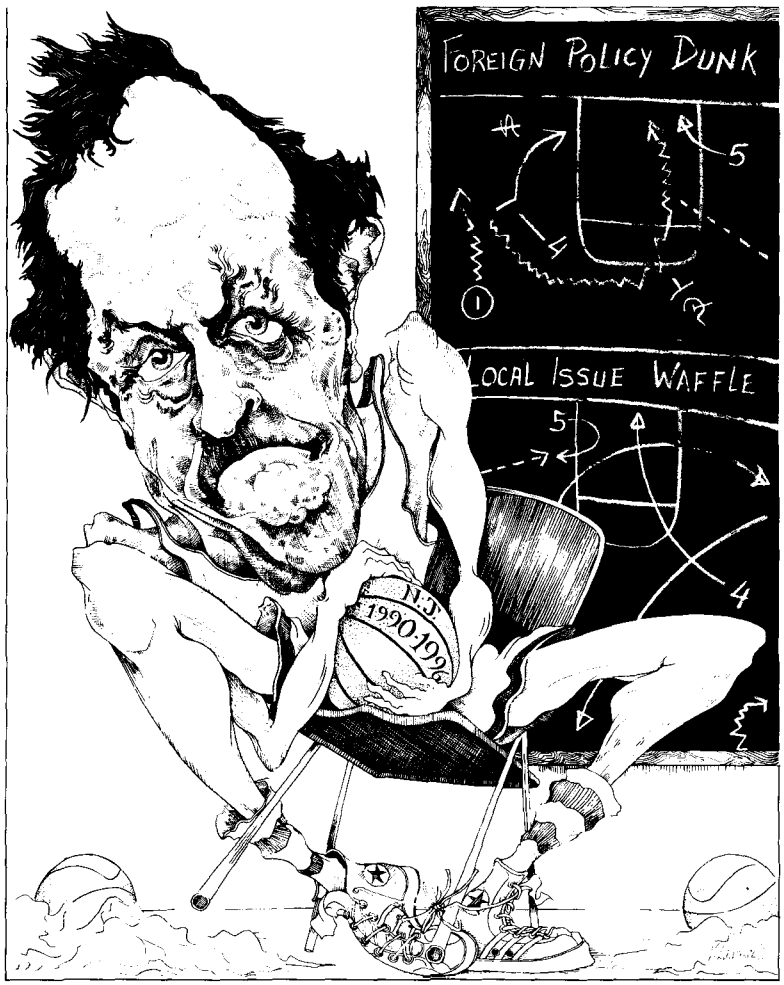
one really for it? Bradley began banging his fist on his desk. "I cannot tell you how many businessmen have come into this office and sat in that chair and said, 'Senator, what do you think about economic relations with the Soviet Union?' " he said. And then he began a lively ten-minute disquisition.

Democrats who have heard Bradley give one of his stock political speeches and who then hear him talk about the Soviet economy are invariably shocked. One New Yorker who heard Bradley a year ago talking about the Soviet Union at a Democratic Party Issues Forum came away amazed. "When I heard him several years ago, he was so boring," historian Ronald Radosh recalled. "But here he was really good. He was funny, he was interesting, and he had good points to make."

Only during last October's debate with Whitman on foreign policy did Bradley display the intelligence and wit that have captivated the Washington press corps. He described U.S. intervention in the Gulf as "more of a Sitzkrieg than a Blitzkrieg." He explained why precipitate military action might not work. "We could be isolated in the area with hostile Islamic regimes unless we are very careful." He told how Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's attempt to "split the difference" between central planning and a market economy would inevitably fail. "I think the only way the Soviet Union is going to move into the twenty-first century is to drastically cut their defense budget and take radical economic measures," Bradley said. His forceful and authoritative answers reduced Whitman to what she was—a minor state official with no national experience or expertise challenging a major national leader.

Bradley's athletic past and his identification with the tax issue have obscured the fact that for a politician he has extremely specialized—and, compared with the average American, peculiar—interests. Bradley becomes passionate when talking about the strategic petroleum reserve. Although he is not on any committees that deal with hemispheric relations, he knows as much about U.S.-Mexican economic relations as any other senator. Even Bradley's interest in the tax code bordered on the arcane. As a reformer, he became absorbed in the details rather than the equity or inequity of the code; he wanted to simplify the code the way a scholar wants to purify a corrupted text.

Shorn of his chamber of commerce pretensions, Bradley has had much the same relationship to New Jersey voters as former Senator William Fulbright, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and another ex-Rhodes scholar, used to have to Arkansas voters. He is respected for his accomplishments, but not for what he accomplishes for his state's voters. Fulbright would come home at election time to shake hands and talk about farm prices, but his real interests were thousands of miles away. Fulbright served from 1944 to 1974, until, in the beginning of a recession, a man with similar foreign policy views, but stronger links to the average Arkansan, displaced him.



BILL BRADLEY BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Bradley, like Fulbright, has little value as a tourist bureau for his district, but he has an important contribution to make in foreign relations and international economics. If he remains true to himself, it is likely he too will be reelected again. But if he tries to convert himself into a handshaking, cliché-ridden pol, New Jersey voters may decide to go for the real thing rather than putting up with an expensive imitation.

Unfortunately, Bradley seems to have drawn the wrong lessons from his near-defeat. On election night he said he had heard the voters' message. "I understand, I really understand," he said. But then he went on to demonstrate that he didn't understand at all. He described the vote against him as a protest against taxes. "I know you don't distinguish between federal, state, and local taxes. Taxes just mean you work more for someone else," he said. And he still didn't say what he thought of Florio's program. Although network commentators were impressed by Bradley's seeming candor, local editorialists bluntly pointed out that the vote against Brad-

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ley was more than a protest against Florio.

Bradley still does not acknowledge that he made a mistake in not discussing Florio's program. When I asked him about the Florio factor, Bradley said, "A lot of people have written me that they didn't hear me talking about any of the things they had hoped for, what we are going to do about oil prices, health care costs, federal taxes. Even though I had taken clear positions and made public statements about these issues it didn't get through to people because that wasn't what they were seeing on television."

Bradley reiterated the need to listen better to people and to talk about what concerns them. But in his case, this could be a recipe for passivity and dullness. As it is, no one spends more time listening to voters than he does. After he retired from basketball, he wrote an excellent book, *Life on the Run*, full of what he had heard and seen on the road. When he was considering a run for the presidency, he periodically disappeared from Washington to spend a day listening to a Louisiana fisherman or a North Dakota farmer. It is almost a fetish with him—perhaps signifying an unbridgeable gap between himself and the average American.

Bradley does acknowledge that he has to take more "risks," but it is not clear just what he means. His close call taught him "the value of being willing to go out and take some risks and talk about some larger issues, framework-type things." Asked to explain what this involves, he says, "I think I could have talked about trade a lot more, I could have talked about my ideas on the budget." But doing this hardly would have been risky.

Surprisingly, Bradley still refuses to rule out absolutely a presidential run in 1992. He sticks by his earlier statement. But should Bradley consider running for president? Probably not. If he had trouble communicating with voters in Piscataway, he would have even more trouble in Mason City or Tuscaloosa. But more important, he suffers from a disability that would be highlighted in a national campaign and that, perhaps, also played some role in his failure to respond to Whitman. His economic policies are out of step with the national Democratic Party, and the country.

Barring a disaster in the Persian Gulf, the 1992 presidential campaign (and perhaps that of 1996 as well) will be fought over the decline of American industry—evidenced not only in unemployment, but in foreign domination of key industries, a continuing trade deficit, and irresponsible investment practices by American corporations and banks. "The only way Democrats are going to get back is through some sort of nationalist program emphasizing economic revival," says William Schneider of the American Enterprise Institute. On these issues, however, Bradley's position has never differed markedly from that of free trade, market-oriented Republicans.

Bradley dismisses warnings of economic decline and rejects the need for what some Democrats have called industrial policy. Like the Bush administration, he would focus on basic science. "I think there is a role for the government in a number of research areas. But that has got to be done very selectively and very rarely." He rejects any attempt to use the tax code to discourage wasteful leveraged buyouts. "The challenge is how do you devise something that could stop the bad and allow the good, and it is difficult to find such a beast," he says. And he labels managed trade as "unworkable."

At a time when U.S.-Japan economic relations have been frayed, Bradley is particularly critical of "defensive nationalism." "Trade disputes cannot be allowed to dominate the U.S.-Japan agenda," he urged in a major speech before the Asia Society in March 1989. And Bradley has acted on that principle: he was the only senator to criticize the mild sanctions bill finally passed against Toshiba and a Norwegian company in August 1988 for selling critical submarine technology to the Soviet Union. He was the only Democrat to vote against a resolution calling for the Bush administration to exercise vigilance in the FSX fighter plane deal with Japan.

One can see quite different influences in Bradley's views. His positions on finance and investment probably reflect those of his father, a Republican banker from Crystal City, Missouri; his positions on trade, Kennedy-era internationalism; and his militant positions on the environment, civil rights, and feminism (Bradley was one of nine senators to vote against David Souter's confirmation to the Supreme Court), the movements of the late '60s. Together, though, these disparate views approximate the neoliberal politics of the early '80s as defined by Democrats like Michael Dukakis and former Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas, although both Dukakis and Tsongas were more inclined to favor government economic intervention than Bradley is. This neo-liberalism was appropriate to Democratic survival during the Reagan years, when a false optimism about the American economy was de rigueur, but is not appropriate to a time when the American century is drawing to a close.

In the end, Bradley may be better suited to be a senator than to be either a presidential candidate or president. As a senator, he can let his mind wander off from his constituents' immediate interests—something that neither a president nor House members can. He can spend a year arguing with Soviet economists, even though the outcome of the argument will affect few, if any, of his constituents. And Bradley's political style is perfectly suited to the Senate. Just as when he was a New York Knick, Bradley is a consummate team player, who knows exactly when to take a shot himself and when to pass off to an eager colleague. The 1986 tax bill does not bear his name, but it was nevertheless his bill, from start to finish.

When faced with a novel issue, and given the time to mull and consult, Bradley has forged novel solutions that go beyond his own neoliberal assumptions. His brilliant proposal for resolving Third World debt, which called for American banks to forgive part of the debts, was a break with conventional, laissez-faire solutions. His support for the contras—but as a means for forcing negotiations—defied both liberal and conservative orthodoxy. In both cases, Bradley's positions evolved over a year of debate and discussion—a luxury that presidents and presidential candidates generally don't have. Happily or unhappily, Bradley now has a few more years to savor that luxury. ●

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NUKING THE NUKES

By Tina Rosenberg

If we are permitted nostalgia for the cold war, let us mourn the passing of a time when we pursued nuclear destruction predictably and methodically, and could trust our enemy to do the same. Today the bomb that could threaten us might be built by a man who relishes telling the world to go to hell. It matters little if we have 5,216 ICBM warheads or the 3,456 mandated by START. Either number is both far too great and far too small against an Iraq with one crude bomb.

Iraq isn't the only threat. To the list of declared nuclear powers (the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Britain, France) and the list of de facto ones (Israel, South Africa, India, Pakistan), we must now add those on the brink of nuclear capacity. Iraq possesses 12.5 kilos of highly enriched uranium, and should be able to make a bomb within a year. North Korea began running a large research reactor in 1987 and now seems to be building a reprocessing plant to turn the reactor's spent fuel into plutonium for weapons. The country could have a crude nuclear arsenal in five years. Libya makes no secret of its nuclear envy and has bought technology from several countries. Iran, spurred by Iraq, has begun to devote more research to its weapons goals and might be able to build a bomb within ten years. These countries are hostile to U.S. interests and behave in ways that seem irrational in Western eyes.

But their desire for a bomb is easy to understand. Governments believe it makes them more secure. This accounts for the nukes of Israel and South Africa, both pariahs in their regions, and for those of rivals India and Pakistan. (According to the Carnegie Endowment's Leonard Spector, Israel has between sixty and 100 atom bombs, South Africa has the essentials for fifteen to twenty-five, India for forty to sixty, and Pakistan for five to ten.) For the same reason, many European countries that could have built nuclear weapons are nuke-free: their security was assured by the superpowers.

The bomb also confers less tangible benefits. "Nuclear weapons are the international currency of power," a leading Indian proponent of his country's weapons program says. It's the Third World's anti-imperialist revenge on the snooty nuclear club. It appeals to prestige-hungry despots. Argentina and Brazil began their nuclear programs under military dictatorships. Civilian presidents halted them. In September, while the heads of the three military branches watched and fidgeted, Brazil's President Fernando Collor de Mello threw the first shovel of cement into a 1,000-foot-deep hole the military had dug as a potential test site.

To control the spread of nuclear weapons, the world has relied on the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty, the 1968 Treaty on Nuclear Nonproliferation, and the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. This regime has put the brakes on many countries' nuclear weapons programs, and persuaded others—Taiwan, Egypt, and South Korea—not to start, or to abandon programs early on. The prediction often heard in the 1960s that some thirty nations would have the bomb by now has mercifully fallen short.

But with two or three new nations going nuclear each decade, we can hardly call the regime a success. Controls have been least effective where they are most needed: with outlaw states like Iraq. And the regulatory mechanisms are deeply flawed. The IAEA, a U.N.-sponsored agency based in Vienna created in 1957, started with a dual mission: to guard against the misuse of nuclear technology for armaments, and also to promote the peaceful use of nuclear power. This tension still exists. "I would prefer to think of all the agency's activities, including safeguards, as promotional," IAEA director Hans Blix said in 1983.

The Nonproliferation Treaty, signed in 1968, placed IAEA safeguards—cameras, seals, and regular inspections—on all the nuclear facilities of signatory countries that didn't already have nuclear weapons. Its flaw was that it divided the world into haves and have-nots, using the arbitrary criterion of nuclear capacity in 1967. The have-nots promised not to acquire nuclear weapons, while the haves promised, in Article 6 of the treaty, "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date." The preamble also committed nuclear states to "the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons."

The idea of forswearing the bomb in exchange for a vague future promise of arms control seemed a bad bargain to many have-nots. India, Pakistan, Israel, South

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Africa, Argentina, and Brazil, among others, refused to sign, citing discrimination. From the have-nots' point of view, the treaty continues to be a dud. Although none of the have-nots that signed the treaty has acquired the bomb (Iraq is currently the closest), the superpowers have gone from about 3,000 strategic nuclear weapons at the time of the NPT's signing to 23,000 today. Bitterness about this failure to disarm has been the principal point of contention at each of the NPT review conferences held every five years. The treaty must be extended in 1995. If the NPT dies, the issue of "balanced compliance" will be the reason.

The third leg of the regime is the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty, which prohibits atmospheric nuclear tests but allows underground tests (which at the time were unverifiable) to continue. Because it treats all parties equally, even the NPT critics have signed it. Its main success has been environmental, cutting nuclear fallout. But underground nuclear tests continue.

What ensures that the parties live up to the treaties? Nothing. The IAEA's inspectors are reporters, not commandos. All they can do is alert the world when they spot a violation—and there are so many constraints on their work that they can't even always do that. IAEA inspectors must schedule visits well in advance, have the host country's approval, and can poke around only where the host country allows. Iraq, for example, kept inspectors out of its plutonium laboratories by claiming the facilities didn't use materials that were subject to inspection. There are only 197 IAEA inspectors to cover the 934 nuclear facilities under safeguards. A determined proliferator can prepare a bomb before inspectors return to discover the diversion.

The IAEA can ring the alarm. The world can choose to keep dozing. The truth is that the West has tolerated proliferation within the family. "Not all 'proliferation' is bad from our perspective," Jim Hinds, a deputy assistant secretary of defense for negotiations policy, testified before a Senate committee in 1989. "It may be very much in our interest to assist our friends and allies in developing the same kinds of [nuclear] technology for the purposes of stability." Nor is nonproliferation a national priority. State Department officials in the Nonproliferation Bureau rarely win battles with other regional bureaus at State. No single congressional committee exists with authority to act on proliferation.

Pakistan's weapons program, for example, was widely known and widely ignored, because we needed Pakistan to help the Afghan *mujaheddin*. In 1985 Congress passed a requirement that for Pakistan to qualify for U.S. aid, the president had to certify each year that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear device and that renewed aid will "reduce significantly" the risk of its getting the bomb. Only in 1990 did a president refuse to certify. And the same day aid to Pakistan stopped, the administration went to Congress to ask for its reinstatement. It's the same story with Germany's blindness to its companies' nuclear commerce with Iraq, Pakistan, and India, among others. President Carter nagged Germany to tighten up, but pressure stopped when German cooperation for the Euromissile program took precedence.

The current regime for stopping the bomb's spread depends on political will that has never existed. The North has overlooked proliferation when it conflicted with other strategic interests. The South has overlooked it out of regional solidarity against the North's arms buildup. But both these factors may be starting to change. The superpowers are more concerned about proliferation now that they are less concerned about each other. The cold war thaw may in turn reassure the South that real disarmament is possible.

The catalyst for turning these trends into a new era is a simple act: a *complete* ban on all nuclear testing. This week the 116 parties to the Limited Test Ban Treaty are meeting at the U.N. This time the agenda will include whether to amend the treaty to ban all nuclear tests. The United States and Britain—which carries out its nuclear tests in Nevada—are the only nations in the world that oppose a Comprehensive Test Ban. As nuclear powers, they can both veto the CTB. Every nuclear-age U.S. president until Reagan favored it. Yet the Bush administration opposes the conference and relegates the CTB to a long-term goal.

What would a CTB do to the U.S. nuclear weapons program? To start with, it would end the development of a few new weapons, such as the ballistic earth penetrator. Scientists would be able to keep designing and testing new delivery systems for existing warheads, but the CTB's blockage of new third-generation nuclear weapons probably explains opposition by the laboratories and among those who still see a use for the Strategic Defense Initiative.

The administration can no longer argue that the Soviets could get away with hiding a significant nuclear test; almost everyone agrees that the old problems in verification have been solved. The new argument is that we need to keep testing for reliability. Reagan and Bush administration officials continually cite Roger Batzel, who while director of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory testified before Congress that problems had developed in many weapons after deployment that were caught only through tests. But a classified report by Livermore senior physicist Ray Kidder said Batzel was talking about problems that occurred decades ago in aspects of bomb design that are no longer used. Weapons must be thoroughly tested before deployment, of course. But scientists check deployed weapons by dismantling and measuring them to see if they still meet original specifications, not by nuclear tests.

The administration also argues that only testing can assure that a nuclear explosion will not occur by accident. (It's never happened.) In December a group of prominent scientists reported to Congress that some weapons would be safer with design modifications, including some, such as the use of less volatile conventional explosives, that could have been done decades ago. The United States could test a few weapons after making these modifications before a

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test ban kicks in, to assure our weapons are safe.

Mikhail Gorbachev, looking surprisingly relaxed, reiterated Soviet support for the CTB during a fifty-minute meeting with some U.S., British, and Soviet legislators sponsored by Parliamentarians for Global Action on November 26. (PGA paid my airfare.) The Soviets halted their tests for nineteen months back in 1985, and in 1990 did only one nuclear test compared with the United States' eight. Have you brought it up with Bush? asked U.S. Representative Tom Downey. "It was on the agenda," replied Gorbachev. "As you'll notice, it's still on the agenda."

It was still on the agenda when the delegation met with U.S. national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, two days after meeting Gorbachev. Scowcroft—co-author of a 1986 Council on Foreign Relations report that backed a CTB as a "significant contribution to containing proliferation"—did say the administration knew the world had changed and some new thinking might be necessary. "If you mentioned a Test Ban under Reagan, you'd be considered a lefty outsider," said Spector. "A few years ago it meant tying our hands. Now we can make the argument that it's a way to contain the programs while we're at the top of the hill."

The CTB would ensure that the NPT is renewed for a significant period of time. It would also slow regional arms races. The drama of a nuclear test tends to jolt rival countries into a response. India accelerated its program after China tested. Pakistan did so after India tested. Both nations, however, say they'd abide by a CTB. If both had known from the start that the other would never be able to test a bomb, they might not have even begun weapons research.

In addition, a CTB would limit proliferation to simple gun-style fission bombs, of the kind that wiped out Hiroshima. Although these can be built without testing, their unreliability means they could never be used with confidence or integrated fully into a country's strategic planning. Even crazed dictators care about getting their targets right. Testing is so crucial for everything else—Nagasaki-style implosion bombs, thermonuclear weapons, bombs on ballistic missiles—that building them under a CTB makes no sense.

Perhaps the best argument against the CTB is that it is naive to place our faith in treaties in this dangerous world. The answer is that the problem with the NPT is not that it's a treaty, but that it is a treaty resented by exactly the same countries it sought to contain, and one without enforcement provisions. A CTB would be different. The near universal enthusiasm for it makes it possible to do something that isn't possible with the NPT: set up real sanctions through the U.N. to enforce it. If a country tests—and we'll know because Iraq couldn't dig a test hole big enough to house the Statue of Liberty without getting caught—other nations could seize the proliferator's foreign assets, multilateral institutions could cut off loans, and U.N. forces could even bomb the violator's nuclear facility. "If the atomic club stops its testing, there might be the possibility for the world to accept that nuclear weapons are not the prerogative of any state," Kazakhstan deputy Olzhas Suliemenov told me in Moscow. "Take what's going on in Iraq. All humanity could look at this model of how to deal with one aggressor. In the future we could act together against regimes that find it necessary to possess nuclear bombs."

Other crucial measures could be added to a CTB. One is strengthening the NPT's safeguards. The IAEA is woefully understaffed, and its budget hasn't increased in six years. There should be more inspectors. The time between inspections should be less than the time it takes to make a bomb after diverting material. Inspectors should be able to drop in without warning and visit a greater range of facilities.

Sanctions should be imposed on arms sellers. Although the German government has been shamed into behaving better, nuclear trading continues. As late as last year U.S. companies were still selling U.S. government-approved technology to Iraq—$1.5 billion worth of which, according to *The Washington Post*, found a use in the Iraqi nuclear program. There's also a new class of Third World nuclear supplier. Brazil sold uranium and enrichment technology to Iraq. North Korea helped Iran's weapons program. Argentina helped Libya. Recent relaxations of controls on technology exports to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have opened new avenues for proliferators. Last March a U.S. Customs sting operation caught Iraq trying to smuggle krytrons—nuclear switching devices. "As of July 1, Iraq can simply go to Romania and buy them over the counter like bags of onions," says Gary Milhollin, director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control.

While we're at it, why not also ban the production of the two materials used in weapons—plutonium and highly enriched uranium? Breeder reactors—the sole civilian use of plutonium—once touted as the path to cheap energy, have turned out to be electricity gluttons. Highly enriched uranium can be replaced in research reactors and nuclear submarines by low-enriched uranium (which has no weapons use). Gorbachev has proposed a freeze on these substances. The United States has declined, an odd position since the United States hasn't made highly enriched uranium since 1964 and in 1988 shut down the last of its plutonium factories. If you still believe making plutonium makes sense, look at Japan. France and Britain reprocess enriched plutonium for the Japanese and it's now time to ship it back, perhaps 150 tons of it over the next thirty years. To avoid a possible plane crash, Japan is planning to ship the plutonium through the Panama Canal escorted only by the Japanese Coast Guard.

Things are surely getting out of hand. The specter of the Iraqi bomb is now jolting us awake to the need for serious nonproliferation measures. The implosion of the Soviet Union now gives us the chance to take them without compromising U.S. security. The tougher and more credible U.N. offers the mechanism for a treaty that will work. It is now up to the Bush administration to abandon its cold war attitude to nonproliferation, thinking that has predictably and methodically made the world safe for nuclear terrorism. ●

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Troubles, Now and Then

All the contributors to the Woody Allen Scholarship Fund can now feel satisfied. The man they have subsidized to learn film directing, which they did by attending the pictures he made while he was learning, is now expert. This has been increasingly evident in his last four or five films, and with his latest, his twentieth, he goes even further. **Alice** (Orion) is very pleasant simply to watch.

See how Allen's camera sorts out people in a party scene; how he combines the movement of people on a large winding staircase with the flow of the camera; how he follows a couple from a crowded courtyard to isolation behind a wrought-iron railing. See how he frames a pair of lovers sitting on a bed under a huge skylight absolutely running with rain. (The room nicely designed by Santo Loquasto, acutely photographed by Carlo di Palma.) Once in a while Allen jars us with a close-up used for no reason, but on the whole, very much so, he has mastered his craft so well that it surpasses mere craft.

But those who supported his progress as a director may be less overjoyed by his screenwriting. Allen wrote *Alice* for his wife, Mia Farrow. (He doesn't appear in the film.) Once again he has treated a New York modus vivendi with hyper-realism, then added touches of the fantastic and supernatural (like the Jewish mother in the sky in his portion of *New York Stories*). Basically, *Alice* could hardly be more trite. Farrow, married for fifteen years to a very rich husband, mother of two children, is bored with her life, impatient with her lack of personal fulfillment. She becomes interested in another man—a musician who is, naturally, quite unlike her husband. To this hoary situation Allen adds an old Chinese doctor who, in Chinatown, dispenses herbs that have magical powers. Those herbs mark the only difference between *Alice* and the legion of prior plays and films about bored, rich wives who dally with men quite unlike their husbands.

The fantasy moments are the most interesting. My only quarrel with them is that they have more effect on the viewer than they do on the people in the film. These characters are filled to the brim with veristic details of the luxe life, yet they more or less blandly accept the fantastic when it happens. When Farrow becomes invisible for a while, when a long-dead boyfriend takes her on a flight over Manhattan, she resumes her life afterward as if she had gone on an amusement park ride—something out of the ordinary but quite comprehensible.

As with other Allen screenplays, he lavishes ingenuity and social satire on the story, he engenders conflict, only to settle everything at the end in swift, cobbled-up fashion. Once again the finish is a quick escape through an emergency exit, rather than a conclusion of what has gone before. But there's a lot of moderate entertainment along the way, mostly derived from the small vices of the plush Manhattan set—chic gossip, and chic chic.

Farrow is a touch too humdrum for the humdrum wife. We don't get much sense of wings beating frustratedly within her and even less sense of the attractiveness that men speak of. It's hard to believe that her ambitious, calculating husband would have chosen this woman. (William Hurt plays him with less than his usual pomposity.) Her sister, a lawyer, is done incisively by Blythe Danner. The picture would have been more amusing if—impossible dream—Danner and Farrow had exchanged roles.

Joe Mantegna plays the Other Man with grubby sexiness. In lesser roles Judy Davis is Mantegna's wife, Cybill Shepherd is a glitzy friend, Alec Baldwin the revenant sweetheart from the past. Judith Ivey has such a small part that she isn't even listed in the program. Apparently these prominent people, and others, are willing to work for Allen in lesser parts than they would accept elsewhere.

If only Screenwriter Allen would catch up with Director Allen.

Mel Gibson's greatest advantage in **Hamlet** (Warner Bros.) is that no one expected much of him. Thus the little that he accomplishes is mildly impressive.

Gibson's fans know him, predominantly, as an action hero; so, quite apart from the choice of a Shakespearean tragedy, the fact that he's playing a prince notorious for inaction has its funny side. He's intelligent, handsome in a tacit-true

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Awakenings. *From Oliver Sacks's book. Robert De Niro as a post-encephalitic patient, Robin Williams as the doctor who brings him around with L-DOPA. Some Movieland touches, but also some conviction and feeling. (Reviewed 1/7&14/91)* **Dances with Wolves.** *Kevin Costner stars and makes his debut as director. A Union Army officer, alone in the West, discovers American space and Indian life. Though overlong, it's frequently gripping and visually gorgeous. (12/10/90)* **The Godfather: Part III.** *As good—and as questionable—as the first two parts. The plot this time involves the pope. (1/21/91)* **Mr. and Mrs. Bridge.** *Evan S. Connell's two novels about the Bridges, conflated. Much of the tone is retained, some of the subtext is dramatized. Joanne Woodward is a bit too perfect for India, Paul Newman strains slightly as Walter. (12/24/90)* **—SK**

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way, has an appealing voice and a decent, humane aura. All these help him considerably, as does his excellent costuming by Maurizio Millenotti. When he can speak quietly in prose, like the bitter prose of the address to Yorick's skull, Gibson is affecting. In the larger moments, particularly where there is verse to be carried, to be used as the medium of heightened being, he flails about somewhat. However, he's never ridiculous, just—a number of times—inadequate.

But this defect is mitigated because so little of the play is used. I'd guess that the director and co-adapter of the play, Franco Zeffirelli, has cut a good deal more than 50 percent of the original. What is retained is often rearranged, not to obvious betterment. For instance, Zeffirelli puts "To be or not to be" after the Ophelia scene, so that he thwarts Shakespeare's clear intent to have that speech interrupted by Ophelia's entrance. Hamlet speaks until he reaches the last word, then there's a fade-out. Plop goes the tension.

Every role is condensed, some to something less than synopsis. Ian Holm, dear man, is flavorsome in what's left of Polonius. Helena Bonham-Carter is too much the present-day English rose in the remnants of Ophelia. Paul Scofield, as the Ghost, is poorly handled, besides being drastically cut. None of film's resources is used to enforce his ghostliness. As Gertrude, Glenn Close is thin and dry. The essence of Gertrude is ductile sensuality (like Gunnel Lindblom in Bergman's theater production). Close is almost antiseptic. The worst loss by condensation is in Claudius, because Alan Bates performs what remains of the role with feral power. But all that is left to him to play is, as his nephew says, a king of shreds and patches.

Zeffirelli misses no chance for enlightenment. In the closet scene, when Hamlet is berating his mother, he lies on top of her on her bed, mimicking sex and finishing with a hot kiss. Freud has often been enlisted in that scene but never less subtly. What must her late husband's ghost, who has been invisibly watching, think of these goings-on? When he appears to his son shortly after, he says, "This visitation is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose." Zeffirelli makes us wonder what purpose the ghost had in mind.

Speaking of purpose, what aim does this entire film serve? Evidently, the slashings and the rearrangements were done for one chief reason: to make it all clear, to ensure that *Hamlet* isn't a remote "classic" for the film audience. Well, Zeffirelli *does* bring it close, especially by using Gibson. But the closer he brings it, the less it looks like *Hamlet.* ●

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The Un-American Mind

By David Bromwich

Giants and Dwarfs: Essays 1960-1990 by Allan Bloom

(Simon and Schuster, 395 pp., $22.95)

Giants and dwarfs? Allan Bloom says that he does not mean to evoke the celebrated metaphor about seeing farther than others because one has stood on the shoulders of giants. What he does have in mind he explains a little obscurely: "The awareness of the existence of giants gives us both an object of admiration *and* emulation. Lemuel Gulliver, in fact a dwarf, was able to live in the company of giants." Actually, Gulliver is pictured as a little man, not a dwarf, in one of the four parts of *Gulliver's Travels.* It is important to Swift's purpose that, morally or intellectually considered, he should appear as neither a giant nor a dwarf. But the mind of Allan Bloom works in broad allegorical strokes. Memorable opposites have their uses in teaching, too, and the strengths of this book are those of the classroom virtuoso who cannot always be troubled to sort out the details. The title remains apt in one sense. One comes to feel here, more than in *The Closing of the American Mind,* that Bloom's big-think iconoclasm is the other side of a large power of admiration.

Emulation is part of that power; so is hatred for what is truly worth hating. The essays, accordingly, fall into three groups: memoirs of great teachers; interpretive studies of great works; and a running polemic against university education as it is now practiced. The book has been swollen by repetition to an unnecessary size, but there are good things in every part: readings of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Richard II,* a general defense of "The Study of Texts," and an up-to-date position paper on the curricular wars titled "Western Civ."

The longest of the memoirs, on Bloom's mentor Leo Strauss, sustains a more than earthly gravity that verges on the hagiographic. Yet this eulogy for a revered teacher is the place to begin. Strauss gives the key to Bloom's method of reading, just as the method shows what lies behind his thoughts about education. Leo Strauss was a political philosopher and a Jewish intellectual of note who left Germany in 1932, having established a reputation with his studies of medieval and early modern religious philosophy. He worked in Paris and Cambridge until 1938, and there, before immigrating to the United States, he started to publish the books on which his current reputation rests.

Some of these are commentaries: on Hobbes, on Machiavelli, on Thucydides, on the figure of Socrates according to Plato and Xenophon. Others are speculative ventures in the history of ideas. Strauss saw a continuous tension between the ancient idea of natural law and modern historicism. He also argued broadly, from the testimony of particular readings, that the threat of persecution had compelled many classics of political theory to be written in an esoteric language. Through all his work runs the suggestion that a political theorist true to his calling is bound on dangerous business. The theorist is a bringer of bad tidings. He says that hope for a perfect political order is mistaken, and may itself be fatal to the survival of any order; out of such hopes came fascism and communism, the ideologies that nearly ended the civilization of Europe. And American democracy is an illicit compromise with the same hopes. Authority must always rest with a few who dare not disclose to the many all that they know. A society like ours, with its apparently popular basis, differs from others chiefly in the degree of irony it requires of its rulers.

It is a strange message—in America, a plainly unwelcome message—and this may account for Strauss's interest in his predecessors who talked in code. It also explains a common feature of the writings of his followers. They have picked up from him and invented for themselves a curious protective jargon. It is composed of ordinary English words, but used in fixed combinations with an effect that is, if not quite esoteric, deliberately dark. Bloom himself speaks of the advance that Strauss made in interpreting "the political problem"—using the definite article with no antecedent and no clear point of reference. He warns elsewhere of the danger of ignoring "the theological-political problem." Does this mean the problem of getting church and state to coexist? Or, maybe, the problem of how far governors should allow the governed to suspect that there is no God?

Similar doubts arise concerning the identity of "the permanent questions." The phrase is brightly offered, yet not one question is named. Now and then the code ramifies strangely by sending up new shoots in a single sentence. Rousseau's originality, for example, is made to depend on his understanding that "the prosaic new philosophy truncates the human possibility." Grant that all of the Enlightenment produced exactly one philosophy, and that we all know what it was. The portentousness comes from hinting that there may be just one real "human possibility."

On the view that Bloom endorses, the political theorist must know enough to accept the authority of . . . authority. This was the great discovery of the ancients, going back as far as Plato's *Republic.* The theorist will also know that there are higher things. The higher things (the jargon is catching) are of the soul and not the state, but this knowledge is a secret knowledge, and fated not to join the currency of public questioning. What sources, then, can one turn to for instruction in the wisdom of politics? A body of texts, replies Bloom, of both ancient and modern provenance, that edify because they seem to converse with one another. From identical fears of instability, they ask identical questions about the foundations of order. Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle belong to this canon; so do Hobbes, Montesquieu, and Rousseau.

The definitive break between ancient and modern comes with Machiavelli, and it occurs from motives that are in no way elusive. As Strauss himself remarked in "What Is Political Philosophy?," Machiavelli "consciously lowers the standards of social action. His lowering of the standards is meant to lead to a higher probability of actualization of that scheme which is constructed in accordance with the lowered standards." Thereafter, republican and democratic leveling turn into live options in politics—as they had not been before, except, of course, in a catastrophic sense.

Licensed by Strauss's own authority, Bloom is able to dismiss some thinkers by resolving their complexity into an error of stance: "Strauss recognized the seriousness and nobility of Max Weber's mind, but he showed that he was a derivative thinker, standing somewhere between modern science and Nietzsche." Others Bloom dismisses en masse: "The most modern philosophers have aban-

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doned reason, and hence philosophy, in favor of will or commitment." Let us skip the obvious challenges here—whether the "between" in the sentence on Weber will satisfy the mildest demand for precision; or whether, say, Wittgenstein, if he be supposed a "most modern" philosopher, will fit any part of the description given above. These are small points because they have to do only with the judgments that follow from Strauss's authority. The basis of the authority lies elsewhere: first, as Bloom suggests, in his discovery that our modern "categories are inherited, questionable"; and second, in the "tentative but ever surer steps" with which he moved toward understanding earlier writers "as they understood themselves."

These interesting premises cannot be made to agree with each other. If, before Strauss came along, our inherited categories were uniformly questionable—if nothing that anyone else had thought could now be trusted—it follows that Strauss was obliged to invent his method of recovering an author's original meaning. In that case, however, the method cannot have passed into his hands by an unbroken chain that links him to the author. It appears, rather, that Strauss must have come upon the method by a kind of divination. This is a captivating but not a satisfactory answer.

Strauss for his part implied, in the essay "On a Forgotten Kind of Writing," that his aim may have been to make interesting rather than correct interpretations. He takes stock there of a charge by his friend Alexandre Kojève, who,

> comparing my method to that of the detective, asserted that there is this difference: that my method cannot lead up to the confession of the criminal. My answer is twofold: I know of cases where the criminal confessed posthumously after having made sure that the detective would not condemn him; and I would be happy if there were suspicion of crime where up to now there has been only implicit faith in perfect innocence.

The tone, quite different from Bloom's, is that of a critic or perhaps an inquisitor, but not a guardian of monuments.

It is a tone, in fact, highly reminiscent of another influential modern commentator, Paul de Man. Strauss and de Man shared a remarkable number of traits. Both were gurus who came to be held in exclusive reverence by the students whom they chose to succeed them. Both owed some of their affective power to their peculiar status as survivors of the European catastrophe: they were émigrés talking to Americans about a European world. Both adhered to a rigid canon of great works, instructive even for the items that were prohibited. Strauss appears to have reserved for the texts of nineteenth-century liberalism (in political theory) the same contemptuous indifference that de Man felt for the texts of nineteenth-century realism (in the novel). But the resemblances go much deeper than this. Strauss's observation that his task as an interpreter is to "read between the lines" might as easily have been offered by de Man; while de Man's assertion that "what we call time is precisely truth's inability to coincide with itself" feels like a paraphrase of Strauss, provided one substitutes the word "history" for "time."

Both of these scholars were obsessed by one story and one story only; and the stories too, though discrete in theme and subject, exhibit a steady affinity. Strauss and de Man tried to show that the interest of any great work is tied to the disappointment of a metaphysical project to which the author must have been irresistibly committed. For de Man, that project is the construction of a stable meaning; for Strauss, it is the construction of a Just City. The difference is that de Man usually argued as if the author were absent from the scene of disappointment, and Strauss as if the author were in control of how the significant failure was staged in writing. Both, in short, were Nietzschean unmaskers to the core.

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In these essays Allan Bloom is a gentler interpreter than either of his predecessors. His matter-of-fact disdain for democratic thought can still be tiresome. Here, as in his earlier writings, Heidegger is treated with an unqualified respect that is denied to Marx, and Marx with at least a distant awe that is denied to John Stuart Mill. The more use a theorist has for "the people," the less use Bloom has for the theorist. The effort to project from a small group of books on politics every modern idea worth possessing also yields some unnecessarily shallow errors. We do not need Freud on sublimation, says Bloom, because we already have Rousseau on the sublime. Rousseau understood that under the reign of modern science every high thought or action will be traced to a low and debasing cause. When Freud speaks of art as sublimation, he can indeed seem to perform this kind of reduction. But is the doctrine of sublimation the best place to look in Freud for analogues of "the sublime"? If, instead, one searches his thinking about the unconscious, about repression, about the powers of the mind that stay hidden from the mind's own inquest, the result is a body of speculation that is not derisory even by the standards of Rousseau and Kant.

But objections like these affect only a scattering of general dicta, and more than half of the book consists of individual readings of texts. The treatment of Rousseau is introductory—helpful on ideas like compassion and the general will, but intended mainly for those who need the help. The discussions of Plato (two dialogues, *Ion* and *Hipparchus*, with translations appended to the commentaries) are clear and almost perversely free of idiosyncrasy. With *Gulliver's Travels*, however, we enter a different atmosphere, and are asked to credit a frankly schematic diagram: Book I, as Bloom interprets it, stands for "modern political practice," Book II for "ancient political practice," Book III for "modern philosophy in its effect on political practice," and Book IV for "ancient political practice used as a standard for judging man understood as the moderns wished to understand him."

Why does the last clause especially—taken as an account of what Swift had in mind when he wrote about the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos—induce a pause of recognition, and then a longer and less certain pause? It is not that the political ideas seem hauled up from an ulterior region: if Swift's intentions were political-theoretical, then Bloom's diagram is as good as most. Yet one feels that only someone trained to inherit these obsessions would have been reminded of them by the structure of Swift's narrative. The conflict between the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos is indeed about the disasters of modernity. It is also about our imperfect sympathy with thought and our unhappy sympathy with feeling.

In Bloom's readings of Shakespeare, his critical practice becomes more interesting than his premises. But something should be said of the premises. "Poetry," we are asked to concede, "is the most powerful form of rhetoric"—a controversial thesis since it implies that poetry is *only* a form of rhetoric. But this, says Bloom, is consistent with the way that Shakespeare conceived of his characters:

> A man is known, not simply by his existence, but by the character of his actions—liberal or greedy, courageous or cowardly, frank or sly, moderate or profligate. Since these qualities produce happiness or misery, they are the specific subject matter of poetry. Passions, feelings, the whole realm of the psychological are secondary.

From this amazing judgment, one might project the whole plot and treatment of Addison's *Cato* and many another neoclassical exercise in controlled morality; but not *Othello*, not *Measure for Measure*, nor any of the two dozen other plays in which Shakespeare's psychological knowledge is part of his interest in humanity.

To judge by a single allusion elsewhere, Bloom thinks of *Hamlet* as the story of a fight between two politicians, Claudius and Fortinbras, in which certain disruptions appear from an unauthorized quarter. If some such reading were plausible, then we could agree that psychology is secondary and settle for a view of poetry as just one form of rhetoric. But few readers will want to confine themselves like this. What is odd is that in portraying Shakespeare as a timeless digest of morals, Bloom should have chosen to invoke Schiller. He associates with Schiller the hope that by "living awhile" with Shakespeare "perhaps we can recapture the fullness of life and rediscover the way to its lost unity." It is doubtful that Shakespeare believed he was in possession of any such unity. Much more in his spirit is the thought that William Empson imagines him to have had for reconciling Hamlet the revenger with Hamlet the man of reflection: "The only way to close this hole is to make it bigger." As for Schiller, he suspected that a distrust of enlightenment was at the bottom of every nostalgia. That is why he argued, in *Naive and Sentimental Poetry*, that the idea of a lost unity is a psychological and not a historical fact.

The discussions of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Richard II* are the high points of Bloom's book. They offer concentrated readings of the dramatic action of the plays—the sort of guided summary that can sometimes follow from scrupulous thought. And as they move forward to the mark, one notices that the flow of weighty talk about the permanent questions has almost all dried up. On *The Merchant of Venice*, Bloom is content to show the impossibility of embracing, in a single society, the Christian charity of Antonio and the Jewish honor of Shylock. He avoids taking a side on the justice of religious persecution, as against the justice of legal revenge, and does not try to guess the degree of sympathy we are expected to feel for Shylock.

Meanwhile the lesser characters—Jessica, Launcelot, and others—are also made to catch the lights and shadows they borrow from the main plot. In the speech by Shylock that begins, "Hath not a Jew eyes?," Bloom notices the detail "If you tickle us, do we not laugh?" and he makes the detail tell: "Shylock characteristically mentions laughter as a result of tickling. He and Antonio would not laugh at the same jokes." Only in the larger moral he draws from the play can one see the trace of a constraining dogmatism. The moral is the fallenness of the City of Man—in this case, Venice. One might reply that Venice is a place where a woman like Portia can show all the depth of her wit. But Portia is required by Bloom to represent pagan culture—a thing he supposes to be antithetical to Christianity in the mind of Shakespeare. Plainly the last is not true; see *The Winter's Tale*, passim. But it is hard to imagine an account of the Renaissance, as such, that does not allow for the ambition of joining pagan and Christian habits of belief.

With a different kind of play—where, in fact, "Renaissance culture" can be taken to signify "Machiavelli"—the narrow intensity of Bloom's method becomes an unqualified strength. This is what happens in his reading of *Richard II*. He interprets the legitimate king, Richard, as an object of sympathy but not respect. The usurper, Henry, does command respect but with a loss of sacred reverence. Thus, Richard "never succeeds in finding himself, but we see the articulation of his soul as he gropes toward his goal. We do not find that Richard is ever good, but we do find him touching." Henry, on the other hand,

> is split. He cannot bear to face the possibility that the sin of Cain, as Machiavelli teaches, may play a role in the establishment of earthly justice. In deposing Richard he was halfway to the realization that he was committing a crime but that such crimes are sometimes necessary for the common

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good. . . . His son returns to his father's original impulse and with healthy self-assurance abandons crusades in favor of unjust wars with France which serve the evident interests of England instead of serving his conscience, using the priests as his political ministers rather than as the masters of his beliefs. He thus unifies England and himself. The Henriad as a whole shows the limits of conscience. Henry V provides a contrast to his predecessors not unlike the contrast between Hamlet and Fortinbras in a play that seems to bear a similar message. The exquisitely refined souls do not belong to the best political men. . . . Knowledge of political things brings with it the awareness that in order for the sacred to become sacred terrible deeds must be done. Because God does not evidently rule, the founder of justice cannot himself be just. He cannot be distinguished from the criminal by his justice or anything else accessible to vulgar eyes.

This is an extraordinarily felt analysis, and an acute description of the morality of Shakespeare's histories. At the same time, there is something queer about the passage—a hesitation it forces on the reader, from a tacit suggestion that the critic endorses every particle of the morality he is describing.

Conscience, says Bloom, is out of place in the politics of this story, and in any other politics. In the City of Man, it is right to want a leader like Henry V. For there are two elites that matter on earth: the nobility of theory and the nobility of action. The latter is the more important, but to the former alone belong the exquisite souls. Fortified by such a soul, a theorist's aim will be to induce a healthy lawlessness in the young blond jungle animal of politics, whose only earlier impulse was a brainless quest for approval from his elders. Bloom has always been kindly disposed to Nietzsche, and here one starts to see the reason. Apart from the ruler whose every prayer is a command, there is one social type worth considering, and that is the philosopher. And yet the philosopher, who sees things unknown to others, is by comparison morbid, inward, "secondary." There is, however, one way for him to rise above the mere irony of his situation. He can do it by backing the edicts and the performances of the king himself.

"You are different," says the theorist to the aspiring politician—"a doer, as I am a knower, of political things. The terrible deeds that you do, I will strive to make sacred." These last words were not written by Bloom, of course. They are nothing but a direct inference from his engaging summary of a work of fiction. Yet the words he writes as a commentator on a text recall other words he has written in his own voice. By the acts of a king like Henry V, the lost unity of a nation may become historical reality with a vengeance. The great-souled interpreter is he who does not shrink from this great spectacle; who knows that the very idea of the sacred is a noble lie, and a lie that must be told; who is not thrown back upon his conscience by the mention of a higher law, for "God does not evidently rule."

The atheism of Allan Bloom is not the most surprising thing about him. Indeed, it seems a cultural more than a personal anomaly that a man of his temper should have written a popular book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, whose message was taken to be a return to the old pieties. He does cherish select monuments, practices, even persons. But his pieties are not America's. They are not like what America's ever have been, or could have been.

By two great movements of thought, in particular, which have affected the lives and feelings of most people today, he shows no sign of having ever been touched in the slightest degree. The movements are Romanticism and Christianity, and they have more than one teaching in common. They say that all men and women are equal in the eye of a power that surpasses every worldly authority. This truth, they say, is a spiritual law beyond the reach of any vicissitude of fortune. And so it must remain—whether one commits terrible deeds or apologizes for them or does neither. One comes to know this authority not by schooling, however methodical, but by consulting the evidence of the soul—or, as it is also called, the mind or self or spirit.

Broad as these conceptions are, they have much to do with the reasons for the founding of America. That they have had absolutely no influence on Bloom emerges in the most academic essay in this book, a critique of John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*. This is the only piece in which the author speaks from the top of a cult—muttering, out of the side of his mouth, crushing ironies that are audible in the front row. It is the only piece in which a sneer is made to do the work of an argument. Bloom does raise some telling objections to Rawls's egalitarianism: for instance, the ease with which the doctrine embraces religious pluralism—a state of things that itself presupposes that every religion has had its claws pared by the triumph of enlightened liberality. But then he does an odd thing. Challenging Rawls's assertion that "the self is prior to the ends which are affirmed by it," he jeers: "A little study would teach him that this notion had its origin in thinkers who were the friends of neither

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reason nor liberal democracy." Bloom has in mind his usual favorites, Nietzsche and Heidegger. He does not have in mind Emerson or Whitman or Thoreau, and it is plain he has never thought of any of them in this connection.

A larger point is at stake here. In the same essay, we hear again the claim that the contract theorists (including Locke and his American followers) "consciously lowered man's sights and view of himself in order to make equality plausible." Perhaps they did—though no argument is offered in support of the claim. But was there not an obvious sense in which they *raised* a standard? Self-respect had never before mattered as they made it matter. Pursued far, this observation would lead back to the consistent neglect by Bloom of American history, American political theory, and American writing generally. He may scorn it, or he may not know it: the effect is the same.

Two American sources are mentioned in these essays with some regularity. The first is Tocqueville's book on democracy, the second is a composite entity called the Founding Fathers. With the latter one can never be sure whether Bloom has in mind the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the *Federalist Papers*, or the powerful interpretation of all these documents by Abraham Lincoln. Anyway we are left with two American texts: one of them written by a French intellectual after a visit, the other scarcely meeting the common understanding of a "text." Something may depend on whether the minds of American readers are closed or open; but it is not clear that Bloom thinks the American mind is capable of producing a book.

The Closing of the American Mind was an easy book to satirize. Bloom's prescriptions, and the imbalance of his style, were the outgrowths of a cult, and one could pretend that there was nothing more to the argument. But some of his negative analysis was true, and it has since become truer; for this, he came to be reviled by his colleagues in the arts and letters. Yet it is not possible to despise Bloom's commitment to reading, which comes out here again in his essay on "The Study of Texts": "He who has read one book well is in a position to read any book, while he for whom books are easy currency is rendered incapable of living fully with one." Bloom supports this belief like a faith, and what troubled him, when he looked at the universities, was a sense that the belief was weakening.

Not only reading, but the idea that an education should serve intellectual ends, was coming under challenge. There is an older anti-intellectualism that holds that students ought to be shown how to become "good functioning members of society"—nothing more. This was in keeping with the utilitarian spirit of a commercial culture, and this way of thinking still continues at the highest levels. But it is abetted now by a more energetic belief that students ought to be given, above all, "a sensitive understanding of diversity and otherness." The first program replaced ideas by a function; the second replaces ideas by an attitude.

It is Bloom's defect as a historian that he treated the second part of the story (the notion that education is sensitivity training) as if it were separable from the first part (the notion that education is job training). But when he writes, as he does in "Western Civ," against the conformism that presses educators today to serve a newfound unity, he carries the conviction of a man who "teaches over his own head." His character knows what his learning has not seen. For he makes us realize that a new unity can be as pernicious a thing as any lost unity: "We praise men now, not for the rightness of their cause, but because they care; the primary thing is not truth but concern. This, of course, puts a premium on fanaticism, not to speak of fakery." Or rather, it puts a premium on compassion, which can be faked. "The conception of a kind of ethnic carnival or festival of cultures or ways of life or customs": the phrasing comes from *The New York Times*, but it could have come, with just the same degree of precision, from the masters of the carnival. These are Bloom's new enemies, and "Western Civ" fully testifies to his loathing of them. He has added to the lecture a footnote on the cant of diversity that is worth quoting in full:

> During the question period I discovered that this project [the festival of cultures] has been a roaring success with at least some students. A Chinese, a black, an Armenian, and a person speaking for homosexuals wondered whether they were being "excluded," inasmuch as books by members of their "communities" are not represented in curricula in proportion to their numbers in the population. They seemed to think that Greeks and Italians had been in control of universities and that now their day is coming. One can imagine a census which would redistribute the representation of books. The premise of these students' concerns is that "where you come from," your culture, is more important than where you are going. They are rather like Plato's noble guardian dogs in the *Republic* who love what is familiar, no matter how bad it is, and hate all that is strange or foreign. This kind of demand is entirely new: you do not go to college to discover for yourself what is good but to be confirmed in your origins.

A few of these sentences took courage to write, and every sentence is admirable, except one—the silly one about Plato's noble guardian dogs. It is a piece of scholastic vulgarity, and most readers will feel that the sentiment is beneath them. The human good of a democratic order is that some of the old refinements start to seem like coarseness after all.

DAVID BROMWICH is the author of *A Choice of Inheritance: Self and Community from Edmund Burke to Robert Frost* (Harvard University Press).

The Supreme Courtier

BY WILLIAM E. LEUCHTENBURG

Abe Fortas: A Biography by Laura Kalman

(Yale University Press, 544 pp., $29.95)

Few men of the past generation could advance such indisputable claims to success as Abe Fortas. So brilliant was his career at Yale Law School, where he was William O. Douglas's prize student, that before he could spend a day at a law firm Yale called him back to its faculty. But he could not settle down in New Haven either, because the Roosevelt administration sought him out. For years he shuttled between Connecticut and Washington, where Jerome Frank called him "one of the ablest youngsters the New Deal had developed." In Washington, Fortas moved steadily upward—from a post as Frank's protégé at the Agricultural Adjustment Administration to an important assignment at the SEC to director of the Division of Power in the Department of the Interior to the significant sub-Cabinet position of undersecretary of the interior, a plum he

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snatched when he was only 32.

His post-New Deal career turned out to be even more dazzling. After the war he helped set up one of Washington's most prestigious law firms, where he profited from the web of friendships spun during the Roosevelt years. His huge fees permitted him to acquire houses in Georgetown and Westport, staffed with servants, and to bestow on his wife a Rolls-Royce. In the 1960s he cut a large figure as one of Lyndon Johnson's chief advisers, and in 1965 the president rewarded him by naming him to the Supreme Court.

His influence extended well beyond law and politics. Fortas, who in his Memphis youth as "Fiddlin' Abe" had once directed the Dixie Peaches, an eleven-woman band, played the violin competently enough to be a regular in a classical string quartet, and his companions in the chamber music world included Isaac Stern and Alexander Schneider. He arranged for the Pablo Casals concert at the Kennedy White House; served on the boards of both Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center; and negotiated the agreement to establish the Hirshhorn Museum. Despite this remarkable record, Fortas is likely to go down in the history books not for his many achievements but for the behavior that led him to become, as Laura Kalman says in this exemplary biography, "the first Supreme Court justice ever to resign under a cloud."

Some of his difficulties, Kalman indicates, resulted from greed and carelessness about appearances where money was concerned. He got into a questionable relationship with American University, which paid him an exorbitant honorarium out of funds raised by his former law partner from businessmen who had been his clients and who might in the future have cases come before the Court. Considerably more noisome was a contract he negotiated with a foundation headed by the financier Louis Wolfson for a retainer of $20,000 a year for life, with payments to continue to his wife for her life if she should survive him. That arrangement with a man who was being investigated at the time by the government for illegal stock manipulation that would eventually send him to prison, Kalman says, "reflected insensitivity and arrogance." She adds, "Meticulous about the affairs of others, Fortas was reckless about his own."

No less damaging was his association with Lyndon Johnson, who sought to elevate him to the chief justiceship but failed, in no small part because the nomination smacked of cronyism: Fortas was widely regarded as LBJ's fixer, even after he became a judge. When he testified at Senate hearings about his relations with Johnson, "he simply lied," Kalman declares. He denied that he had advised the president on judicial appointments when, in fact, he had often done so, and he claimed that he had never "initiated" proposals, which was also a falsehood. He insisted, too, that he had made no recommendations on Vietnam, whereas in truth he had been an aggressive hawk who characterized efforts to get Hanoi to negotiate as "nonsense" and who advocated "carrying the war to North Vietnam—without explanation or apology."

Despite this crushing rejection, Fortas might have remained on the bench for the rest of his days. The Wolfson scandal, however, and more generally his inability to put his duties as judge above his role as the president's henchman, proved his undoing. He became so preoccupied with serving Johnson that one of his clerks knew he could get away with napping in Fortas's chambers because the justice was rarely there. Furthermore, when he recommended that Johnson consider measures against crime that were "constitutionally dubious," Kalman comments, Fortas "ran the risk of compromising his judicial integrity." And when his world was collapsing about him, he behaved badly again. To win the support of his colleague Hugo Black, who urged him to resign, he told him that if he quit it would kill his wife, when in reality his wife had been urging him to step down. "Abe, it's too much," she said. "The hell with it. It's not worth it to live this way."

What went wrong? How did it happen that a career that began with so much promise ended in shambles? That is the conundrum Kalman, an associate professor of history at the University of California, Santa Barbara, a member of the California bar, and author of the highly regarded study *Legal Realism at Yale, 1927-1960*, propounds from her clinical opening sentence: "Abe Fortas wanted to become a Supreme Court justice, pretended otherwise, was appointed anyway, nearly became chief justice, and resigned in disgrace." With impressive thoroughness, Kalman has examined manuscript archives from New Haven to San Juan, and conducted a number of probing interviews. She also gained access to law firm papers, including "privileged documents" from Arnold and Porter. In no way, though, has she permitted that courtesy to shape her narrative. Indeed, many of her judgments about Fortas sting. Yet she also acknowledges his many accomplishments and is scrupulously fair-minded.

Fortas's behavior, she suggests, derived from his experience in the 1930s. Legal realism, which became the dernier cri when Fortas was at Yale Law School, instructed him that there were no eternal principles that commanded respect. New Deal administrators, who gave him his political education, taught him not to be troubled by legal niceties so long as he came up with results in the public interest. "I want to assure you," one of them informed his subordinates, "that we are not afraid of exploring anything within the law and we have a lawyer who will declare anything you want to do legal." The emphases of both legal realism and the New Deal gave young lawyers an extraordinary amount of discretion. "As long as they were serving the public good, these lawyers believed they could manipulate or abandon the rules they themselves made," Kalman asserts.

When the age of Roosevelt ended, their government service gave them entry into lucrative careers in the private sector, where "they retained faith in their own righteousness even as they turned their principal efforts to . . . representing the interests they had once attacked." In the 1960s New Deal notions were reborn under Lyndon Johnson,

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and one link between Fortas and Johnson, she states, is that both had come to political maturity under FDR, and "as unusual measures had saved the country from the Depression, both justified irregular actions that furthered noble ends. Something in their backgrounds had led both men to deviousness and dissembling."

Still, not all New Dealers followed the paths of Fortas and Johnson, and Kalman offers ample evidence that her subject's shortcomings resulted less from his early background than from flaws of character. His law school classmates remember him as "very tightlipped" with them but "always toadying up to the professor who was in the best possible spot for Abe." Unlike his youthful peers, he was "a full-blown adult conniver." His co-workers on the law journal viewed him as a despot. "In my entire life," one of them later said, "I don't recall hating anyone except Fortas. I hated him because he was a monster."

At Arnold, Fortas, and Porter, associates found him a creative teacher but a nasty supervisor. As in New Haven, he was charming toward those who mattered, but cruel to those under him. "Every law firm has a taskmaster who's a son of a bitch," one former associate remarked, and Fortas took on that function with such relish that he exuded a "physicality of menace." A man of inordinate ambition who even as a teenager was singled out by a Memphis newspaper as "a natural-born hustler," he was capable not only of bruising those who were near him, but also of transgressing the bounds of proper behavior. "As a public servant and officer of the court, he prescribed rules for society," Kalman observes. "As a private individual, he bent them."

Kalman presents Fortas not as a villain, though, but as a man of infinite complexity. One person who worked for him in a New Deal agency, she notes, had only praise: "Never a cruel boss, never a sharp tongue." Sometimes he could be sweet and harsh simultaneously. A man who had been defended by Fortas against charges of "un-American" behavior characterized him as "very gentle," but toward his foes "very mean and rough" down to "the last ounce of blood." Kalman never lets us forget that Fortas had unsavory opponents, and that when he ignored legal restraints he often did so on behalf of worthwhile causes. At a time when some of the most respected public figures justified the internment of Japanese-Americans, for example, Fortas short-circuited regulations in order to liberate nisei from the camps, a maneuver that led one War Department attorney to recall him as one who "cut a few close corners," but also as "a very strong force for the good."

There is more, then, to Fortas's place in history than the story of his decline and fall. As Kalman shows in admirable detail, Fortas, for all his wealth and power, never ceased to be what Clark Clifford called him, "a deep-seated dyed-in-the-wool one-hundred-percent liberal." As a young New Dealer, he sought to protect investors against rapacious financiers and fought for the rights of small farmers. During the McCarthy era, he defended those falsely accused of Communist ties, and he usually did it without fee. Asked why his firm took so many loyalty cases, Fortas responded, "We have to do it. Nobody else will." When the Supreme Court appointed him to represent Clarence Gideon, he won approval of the principle of the right to counsel in every state felony case. (*Gideon's Trumpet*, the movie version of that historic case, appropriately starred José Ferrer, one of Fortas's former clients from McCarthyism times.)

As a Supreme Court justice, Fortas urged fair trials for those accused of crimes, endeavored to take the taint of criminality off alcoholics, and sought to enhance the rights of juvenile offenders. Earl Warren called one of his opinions "the Magna Carta for juveniles." "He became an advocate of the outsiders with whom he identified himself," Kalman reports. "His opinions showed greatest concern with empowering the underprivileged and protecting the right to privacy." But she adds, "To promote these and other ends, he used whatever means he had at hand."

So take care, this lucid and gracefully written biography implies, before forming too quick a judgment about its subject. In one of her many well-honed paragraphs, Kalman steps back to assess him:

> He was an outsider who played the consummate insider. . . . He was relentlessly ambitious, but he was remarkably loyal to friends and clients. He seemed to think only of himself, but he often willingly sacrificed for others. He was a committed reformer, but he often seemed more a technocrat than an idealist. He wanted to do good, but he was equally interested in making good. He was an actor, lawyer, and musician, a devoted social reformer who reminded some of Sammy Glick and others of the prototypical bureaucrat.

One comes away from this book less with a righteous feeling of condemnation than with a sense of sadness, for Fortas and for his country, that he would not, or could not, resolve these many contradictions within him.

WILLIAM E. LEUCHTENBURG, William Rand Kenan Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is president of the American Historical Association.

Edgar Degas: "Family Portrait (or the Bellini Family) 1858-1860"

Each member is held in place
like a mounted butterfly
by invisible metal pins in an
airless, odorless vitrine. Father is

seated, not at ease in his
stiff chair. He touches no one,
and though he faces them, he sees no one.
Both girls wear pinafores, white wings. The one

at center stares past Father;
Sister smiles, smooth as water
by Mother's arm. Mother is the Black Queen.
No head is higher. She stares deep into

her own space, all her *rightness*
in the way she holds her head:
not will nor determination, nor is
it superiority, but this is

how the world must be, silver
trays for the fresh watercress
sandwiches and hot tea, a framed drawing
of a famous forefather, gilt under

glass, flowered Turkey carpet,
gilded desk, marble mantel
whiteness—snow, *crème fouettée* surrounding
winter fires. Darwin announces we

descend from apes; Nietzsche will
declare God is dead. But this
is the right, the perfect world: we carry
the white man's burden; the Jews are vermin.

MARILYNN TALAL

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The Real Founding Fathers

By Jasper Griffin

The Greek Discovery of Politics
by Christian Meier
translated by David McLintock

(Harvard University Press, 352 pp., $32.50)

Bread and Circuses:
Historical Sociology and Political Pluralism
by Paul Veyne
translated by Brian Pearce

(Penguin USA, 512 pp., $27.95)

Pericles of Athens and the Birth of Democracy
by Donald Kagan

(The Free Press, 350 pp., $22.50)

There was a time when the history of ancient Greece and Rome was the model of all history. Its historians—the discursive Herodotus, the brooding Thucydides, the sinister and epigrammatic Tacitus—were the models for all historical writers, and the events of which they wrote had a special fascination. No past period can any longer have that unquestioned centrality—and yet Greece and Rome remain unparalleled in the collective mind of the West. On the far side of an abyss of barbarian invasions, the burning of libraries, and the heyday of religious fanaticism, we can distantly see another high culture, like yet unlike our own, in which ideas of democracy, liberty, and the rule of law were memorably debated. Such a society existed, and it ceased to exist: those are both momentous facts.

It was a world that remains "the nearest point to home in foreign territory." To make those remote yet relevant people intelligible is a task on which many excellent modern scholars and writers are hard at work, and the inexhaustible interest of the subject is shown by the range and the vitality of such books as these, by a German, a Frenchman, and an American. Christian Meier and Paul Veyne are two of the most powerful historians now writing on the world of ancient Greece and Rome, philosophical rather than antiquarian writers, who generalize and impose patterns of meaning on the evidence. Donald Kagan is an eminent historian of classical Greece here offering to a wider public a book that expounds and glorifies the Athenian democracy.

Meier discusses two central questions about ancient Greece, so obvious that they are often not even asked. First, how did democracy come into existence? For, as he points out, the Greeks "had no Greeks," that is to say, they were in a radically different position from all later societies, in that they could not look to any known historical example of democracy. Second, how was it that in classical Athens politics was so dominant? In Meier's account, all of Greek culture was connected with politics—indeed, "the political arose only among the Greeks," and "Greek civilization is the one political civilization in the whole of world history." Greeks were examples of political man; we, by contrast, are examples of economic man. (The ambiguity between Greece and Athens runs through his book, and quite a number of the things he says about Greece are really true only of Athens.)

Kagan's book also deals with the democratic society of Athens, but in a very different style and with very different conclusions. It centers on the great democratic leader Pericles, and traces his career as the creator of a unique society, based on political equality but accepting economic inequality. That society offered, for the first time, a vision that combined democracy with imperial power, artistic patronage, and a life that made every citizen an aristocrat. It is part of Kagan's argument that democracy needs such a vision, that the fragile flowers of emerging democracy in Eastern Europe and elsewhere will not survive without it.

Veyne's subject is less general, but no less central to both Greek and Roman society: the obligation of wealthy men to confer largess on their community. The Athenian democracy actually made this into a system of taxation, which worked in such a way that a man of property was assessed for tax purposes at the cost, say, of staging a set of tragedies or manning a warship. That ship was then his contribution, his ship. He had a legal obligation to equip and to man it. But there was also another pressure, not a matter of law but still very powerful: to do it lavishly, to a standard above the barely acceptable. As such men loved to boast, they did it "splendidly" or "regardless of expense." In this way, an aristocratic pride showed itself in a democratic duty.

In the cities of the Roman empire, the local upper class was constantly pressed by public opinion to give money for public purposes. This was not taxation, and it had no legal force. Still, the expectation was strong and could be strident, and great scenes of public clamor and public demands could put almost irresistible pressure on reluctant notables. They might try pleading poverty or undertaking to accept public office, which in this period had as its chief purpose the lavish spending of money sometime in the future: only not, please, now!

On the whole they did pay up, especially in the long halcyon period from the late first century A.D. to the early third century. That is when those enormous theaters and temples were built, and those triumphal arches and statues, which dictate the modern tourist's picture of the Roman empire, all the way from Spain to Iraq. Their ostentation and their grandeur clearly took precedence over any question of practical utility. Splendid buildings, splendid public feasts, and splendid gladiatorial shows: this, rather than a steady food supply or a welfare state, was what the cities and their benefactors conspired to create.

Meier and Veyne have both been well translated into English, though Meier's book is rather hard going. They have in common an approach that the different texture and style of their books tend to mask. Meier and Veyne both attach very little significance to class as a causal factor, and both combine erudite documentation, in the ancient material and in the works of modern scholars, with speculation about the psychology and the motives of the ancient people and, indeed,

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with a conviction that psychology and the study of human motives are the most important key to the understanding of history.

That may seem self-evident, but in the work of serious historians it comes as a surprise, almost a shock. Impersonal forces, superpersonal processes, the dialectic, the movement of history, false consciousness, the assumption that economic motives are the only real motives: of all this familiar paraphernalia we find, in these writers, barely a trace. It might almost seem that they are reverting to the sort of explanation of events that was favored by the ancients themselves, explanation in terms of the intentions of human agents. The ancients, however, preferred to invoke the impact of great individuals, of Pericles or Caesar, while these historians are thinking more of the psychology of the majority, the collective psychology of the people of the time. Kagan is even more defiant, and even closer to ancient perspectives. "To tell the story of an individual's life and to treat him as a powerful force that significantly shaped not only his own times but centuries to come is not fashionable. Still less is it common to attribute to him heroic qualities, as this book does." Perhaps the impersonal and abstract style that has dominated the writing of ancient history really is on the retreat, or at least on the defensive.

Meier gives a summary account of the situation in Greece in the sixth century B.C. The factors that have often been singled out as the causes of democracy—the absence of strong monarchies and of a priestly class, the geography of Greece that divides people into small separate states, the introduction of a style of armor and of warfare that called not for individual aristocratic champions, but for a solid phalanx of undifferentiated bourgeois infantry—these and other factors are not causes, in his view, but at most preconditions for the invention of democracy. The causes are to be found elsewhere: in the appearance of a new sense of social identity, in a readiness to make a commitment to a new order of society.

The aristocratic reformer Clisthenes, who in the course of civil conflict with rival aristocratic leaders radically reformed the constitution of Attica, who "took the *demos* into partnership," in the words of an ancient source, has often been described by moderns as if he did not know what he was doing, as if he established the Athenian democracy by oversight. Not so, for Meier. In his view, Clisthenes was responding to a widespread demand in the hearts of many people that there should be an order of society that would establish justice and legal (not social) equality, and that would not be at the mercy of competing nobles.

The actual evidence for this crucial step, however, is flimsy. Meier puts his case in such language as this: "In due course men *were bound to realize* that no true and lasting improvement of the civic order was possible unless fairly broad sections of the citizenry assumed a political role," and "*We may reasonably conclude* that there was at this period a growing demand for political participation among broad sections of the population in many parts of Greece." Such language brings out the sad truth, which is that we have no real positive proof for this, except the fact that in Athens—not "in many parts of Greece," another unexplained fact—democracy was really established; and since the historian has decided that the cause must be a mental change, then that change must have taken place.

As for the actual reforms that established democracy at Athens, Meier argues that the crucial one was the regrouping of the units of the population. The ancestral divisions—the "tribes," as they are rather misleadingly called in English—were swept away and replaced by entirely new ones. Each new tribe consisted of three parts, each one geographically separate from the other two. That broke up old associations and the inherited domination of the units by powerful families. It also brought citizens from all over the country into constant contact; and it brought them into contact exclusively as citizens, since they had nothing else in common.

All citizens could attend and vote in the assembly. Since not all would go, and since some lived farther away than others, a council of 500 was set up, to be in regular activity for a short period; its membership was drawn equally from each of the ten tribes, and changed each year. In this way the largest possible number of citizens would be actually involved in day-to-day political activity and decision-making, would be constantly reinforced in their perception of themselves as citizens and made more eager to participate actively in the life of politics, in which they were involved directly and not by representatives whom they could influence only at election time. The breaking of old associations and habits of deference, the spread of acquaintance with other Athenians on a fundamentally political basis, the habit of voting and taking decisions: all this was the intention of Clisthenes, and it aimed at the entrenchment of a set of attitudes, at a self-image, that made the Athenian a political animal and a democrat.

Thus the aim of Aeschylus's *Eumenides* was precisely to show democracy in action. Both the matricide Orestes and the ghastly Furies who hound him are extreme in their arguments, and the decision of the jury is arbitrary in its grounding and as narrow as possible (one vote) in its margin; but that is precisely the point. Political opponents confront each other and argue their one-sided views. One prevails, and the decision, however arbitrarily reached, is a decision and must be accepted; and, no less vitally, the victorious side must show generosity to the defeated, give them rights and a position in the community, as the Furies are given honors and a position in Athens. True political action involves moderation, avoids feuds and vendettas.

At the heart of Meier's view of history lies the importance of people's self-perception. The Athenians came to see themselves as political, identifying themselves with the success and splendor of their city, and "a surprisingly large number of Athenians neglected their domestic interests to a quite surprising extent in order to play their part as citizens." In a way, it can be seen as little more than a restatement of the facts themselves: the Athenians developed democracy because they felt a desire for it, and they practiced it with energy and determination because they thought of themselves as democrats. A kind of circularity menaces these propositions. But the energy and the learning (and the occasional repetitiousness) with which Meier argues his case force the reader to think and to see the truth of his arguments. A new mentality was involved.

Veyne's provocativeness is more explicit. Rather than "the confused and violent phenomenon we commonly call class interest, I prefer to speak of social superiority, so as to eliminate the too directly and narrowly economic connotation of the other expression. Politics was in that epoch a mode of this theme of superiority." We go quite wrong, he contends, when we explain the activities of the nobles in ancient cities in terms of their economic interest. Quite the contrary, "The political class regarded its economic advantages merely as a means of sustaining its political and social superiority." As for politics itself, "Politics is not what people think it is, or not only what people think it is. . . . [It is] an inner relationship between minds." In fact, "Politics, like love, is an inner relation of consciousness." "Politics, like love"—we are no longer in Germany, we are now in France.

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There are fascinating insights in this book, still large though it has been reduced by about a third and given a useful introduction by Oswyn Murray. About the cities ruled by the Roman empire, at least, there is a lot of truth in his view that the notables conferred benefits on the community, not in order to gain power, but because they already had it. It should be added, though, that this state of affairs existed, and politics in any real sense had ceased to exist, because the Romans, conquerors and overlords, were hostile to any form of civic government other than the ascendancy of the local upper class. Veyne and Murray are wrong to regard this as caused by internal developments. It was external pressure, ultimately irresistible, that produced a situation in which political change—and therefore political activity—became impossible.

Parallels with Western influence in some countries of the Third World suggest themselves, though neither of these scholars makes them—for example, when Veyne, in a subtle and perceptive account of the ancient importance of gifts and presents of all kinds, tells the story of the conservative Athenian statesman Phocion, who was offered an enormous present by Alexander the Great and declined it. The king was very angry and said that men who would not take presents from him could not be his friends. But Phocion saw how the acceptance of such gifts compromised the recipient's freedom of action. Gifts ("aid") from imperial powers, political immobility, compromised local elites, even the preference for showy expenditure (airlines, palaces, armaments) rather than food and education: the parallels are powerful, and their implications, it must be said, are not encouraging.

The non-economic conception of politics is also applied by Veyne to imperial Rome itself. Why did the emperors lavish fantastically expensive shows and spectacular buildings on the populace? Why did they attach such importance to maintaining a dole of free corn? The populace did not elect or choose emperors, and they could not get rid of them, either. The part of the answer that is understated by Veyne relates to prestige; visitors to the imperial city had to be impressed by finding it opulent, overwhelming, obviously the mistress of the world. Veyne prefers to pursue a rather different line of thought. The emperor gave gifts, he says, because he was the emperor. It was his function, his definition, to perform unforced acts of generosity and goodness. For rulers need to believe that they are good: "The kingly function needs to believe in the activity which exalts it, as Latin teachers believe in Latin and French wine-merchants believe in the worth of the wines of France." At the great spectacles the emperor sat with his people, sharing their pleasure. Emperors who showed that they felt superior, like Julius Caesar, who made a point of writing letters at the games, were resented. At the games, by tradition, the people could show a certain freedom of speech, and the emperor responded by showing good humor. All this is true and important, and it is often squeezed out of historical writing.

Unfortunately Veyne tends to exaggerate his point. His notion that the upper class "regarded its economic advantages *merely* as a means of sustaining its political and social superiority" is overstated. The members of that class regarded their wealth as a direct source of pleasures and satisfactions, and also as a guarantee of their future economic superiority; the best way to get rich, then as always, was to be rich already. Another example concerns irregular payments to the military. Emperors allowed the custom to grow up that the soldiers received large cash presents, "donatives," especially when a new emperor was establishing himself, needed support, and was vulnerable. The armies often took a hand in creating, or imposing, an emperor. All this, Veyne insists, was not done primarily out of economic interest. "The accession gift had symbolic value," it was "the sign of a family relationship between the emperor and the army." As for the imposing of an emperor by the Praetorian guard, "What they wanted, above all, was that the emperor should not be made without them, for mere possession of political power is a pleasure, no less than the use that can be made of it." All that is true; but surely the crude economic facts retain importance, too.

Kagan agrees with Meier that for democracy to succeed there must be "a body of citizens who at least have developed a character consistent with the democratic way of life"; but that is not really what interests him. Most of his emphasis falls on another element: "a high quality of leadership." And that was the vital role of Pericles.

An aristocrat by birth, from the same great family as Clisthenes, Pericles achieved a dominant position at Athens and kept it for thirty years. An intellectual and a friend of intellectuals, he believed in the democracy, which he established in its definitive form by passing a law mandating that citizens be paid by the city for attendance at the national assembly and for service on the great juries. There could be as many as 501 jurymen for an important case, and many cases were highly political. The assembly was supreme in politics, and the citizen could go along and vote directly on questions of peace and war, international alliances, and anything else. The contrast with our own democratic procedure is sharp. If we were to criticize an ancient Athenian because his democracy excluded women and slaves, he would probably reply that under our procedures only members of Congress or Parliament have any real political rights, while the rest of us are governed by administrations that tell us their most important decisions after they have taken them.

Kagan's account of Pericles is frankly that of an admirer. He refers to his hero's "magnificent career," and Pericles

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is given the best of it at most points of possible controversy. Scholars are generally made uneasy by such open partisanship, and there are points of detail in Kagan's interpretation that one could question. It is often a stumbling block for modern democrats, for instance, that Pericles was responsible for a law that restricted Athenian citizenship: no longer could the children of Athenian men and foreign women be citizens, both parents must now be Athenians. This was undoubtedly a popular move. It limited the number of those eligible for the benefits, increasingly worth having, of the democratic welfare state. Even more important, it aimed to put a stop to the custom, widespread in the aristocracy, of intermarrying with powerful families in other states. The sons of such unions were some of the greatest men of their time; but their foreign connections enabled them to evade the control of the *demos*, the increasingly assertive general citizen body. Such a man could withdraw abroad, in time of political difficulty, and perhaps hope to return and make himself dictator (in Greek, "tyrant").

Kagan disposes of the illiberal aspect of this Periclean institution with the assertion that

> the new law meant that henceforth political membership in the community would be determined not by traditionally aristocratic religious bodies, or even by individual local townships, but by the people as a whole. It was an assertion of the sovereign power of the Athenian assembly on the seat of the democracy.

But, first, that is not true; it was precisely by local hereditary associations that citizenship was decided. And second, we should be surprised if such a law were nowadays to be applauded on such grounds.

This is, I think, more than a debating point, because Kagan's expressed aim is to offer a tract for our times. "Periclean Athens has a powerful meaning for us. . . . In spite of their antiquity, the Athenians may have believed things we have either forgotten or never known; and we must keep open the possibility that in some respects, at least, they were wiser than we." Above all, Pericles is an example of vision in politics. Kagan is right to emphasize that his aim was to annex for democracy the characteristic standards and goals of an aristocratic society: glory, splendor, honor. The great buildings on the Acropolis, the great tragedies and comedies performed at festivals for all the citizens, went along with an ethos that valued public service and participation by all in the real business of politics.

This was "the great democratic society Pericles had in mind"—I think I hear an echo of John F. Kennedy—and Pericles "wanted to create a new kind of state, a place for the development of the aesthetic and intellectual greatness inherent in humanity." It is that vision that above all is needed now: "The new democracies will need leaders in the Periclean mold, leaders who know that the aim and character of true democracy should be to elevate their citizens to the highest attainable level, and that cutting down the greatest to assuage the envy of the least is the way of tyranny." That last point is an important one: the Athenian democracy aimed at political equality, but it did not, even at moments of extreme political tension, not even after right-wing coups, expropriate the rich. And so we, too, can be democrats without taint of socialism.

The rationality of Pericles, his freedom from superstition, his public patronage of the arts and his association with artists and thinkers, and his belief, which we have no reason to question, in the value of democracy: all this is admirable, and it would be a fine thing if we could succeed in producing such leaders for the democracies of the modern world. But, as Kagan finally must admit, Pericles' foreign policy led to the great war with Sparta, the plague that was caused by wartime overcrowding, and the complete defeat of Athens. "At the time of his death Pericles' strategy was a manifest failure." And that failure was largely due, in Kagan's own analysis, to Pericles' inability to see the limits of rationality in international affairs.

Pericles intended his actions and gestures to go exactly as far as they did go, and to stop at that planned point; and the other side was expected to respond in the same spirit, seeing that he meant to be firm, not to force a showdown. Kagan thinks the failure of this policy shows that Pericles underrated the role of emotion and the irrational in such transactions: moves that were meant to seem firm were interpreted as aggressive. I think he gives Pericles rather too much credit. We all think our own moves firm but not aggressive. But it is a vital part of statesmanship, as it is of dealing with a collaborator or a spouse, to judge the reaction that one's firm moves will provoke.

And beyond the question of responsibility for the Peloponnesian War lies a more general question, less easily answerable. Pericles might have been a little cleverer in negotiating with Sparta, but the nature of the Athenian democracy would still not be so straightforwardly imitable or admirable as this book suggests. The democracy was imperialist: its

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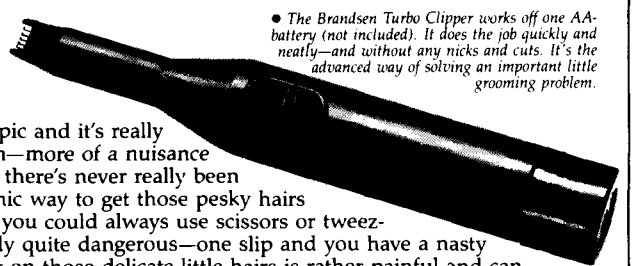

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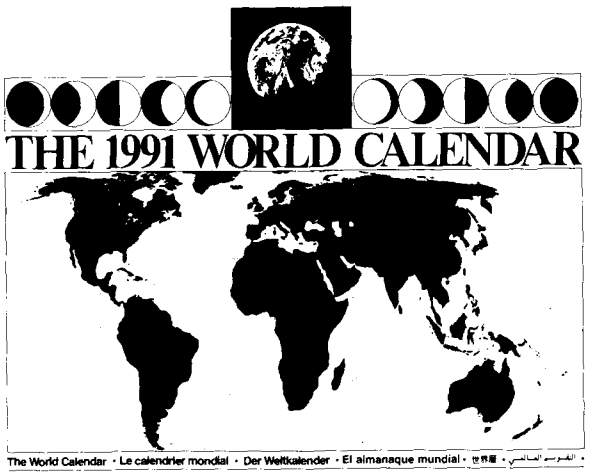

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pride and greatness of spirit, as well as its financial resources, were bound up with its domination of a large number of other Greek states. This raises a delicate question: How many imperialist democracies can the world contain? Was the great democratic society also on offer for the cities that paid tribute to Athens, or only for the imperial city?

Thucydides describes Pericles ending his last speech by urging the men of Athens to reflect that

> our city has the supreme reputation among all mankind for never yielding to reverses but expending more lives and more exertions in war, and that it has the greatest power yet known, the memory of which will be eternal, even if we now suffer some defeat: that we have ruled over more Greeks than any Greek city has ever done, and held out against the greatest wars, against single and united opponents, and that we have lived in a city which was in all respects the richest and the greatest.

That speech was made after the outbreak of the great war and the ravages of the plague. It shows the other side of the Athenian spirit: their restless activity, their aggressiveness, their ultimately tragic acceptance of glory and danger (aristocratic qualities, we might say). Pericles' oration was not quite an expression of bourgeois peace and quiet. It is still not clear that we can have our quiet comforts, plus the heady extras of political participation and great art, without encouraging qualities that will endanger it all—even if the democratic nations were to succeed in electing more splendid leaders than, in the twentieth century A.D., they seem inclined to want.

JASPER GRIFFIN is a fellow of Balliol College, Oxford.

Cast of Characters

BY STANLEY KAUFFMANN

The House of Barrymore by Margot Peters

(Knopf, 612 pp., $29.95)

One day in July 1933, when I was a drama student, I spent the entire afternoon and evening at the Capitol Theater in New York. The Capitol used to show a new film and a bill of vaudeville. The vaudeville bill that week was Ethel Barrymore in Barrie's one-act play *The Twelve Pound Look.* I saw the whole program at the first showing. When the film came on again, I went out into the ornate lounge with a book I had brought, returning three times to see Barrymore's performance a total of four times—in one day. What a treat.

The four performances were perceptibly different. The first, around 1 p.m., was the work of someone who wasn't quite awake yet. The second improved, and the third was the best: the fourth seemed an effort to repeat the third. Somewhat later I learned that a little whiskey might have cheered the day for Barrymore as she went along and, by the last performance, might have overcheered it slightly.

Yet each time I was sharply aware that I was seeing a kind of annunciation. A woman came in who was irresistible, dominant in the very split second of appearance, and before she had been there half a minute she had told us that she was both the woman she was playing and the woman who was playing her. As great actors will, she presented herself as well as her role, and her ability to do that, without either scanting the character or parading her self, was her fundamental gift to us.

I was also aware, even then, that I was seeing one of the last of a line. This was a matter of style, but style rooted in etiology. Barrymore had been born into and brought up in a theater in which the actor was prime, was the reason for the theater's existence. She had survived into an age when the playwright was prime and the director was coming to share that primacy. I felt lucky to have arrived in time to see this scion of an actor's theater.

Her heritage is amply chronicled in Margot Peters's biography of a family, *The House of Barrymore.* Peters tells us early of the extraordinary woman who was Ethel's grandmother, Mrs. John Drew. She managed the Arch Street Theater in Philadelphia for thirty-one years, acted constantly (forty-two roles in her first year there), and bore three children. When Mrs. Drew came to retire in 1892, she said in her last curtain speech, "To hear these walls resound with applause for simply acting and nothing more, the acting of an old comedy, merely acting, is something to make an actor's heart almost burst with joy." It was this woman's granddaughter whom I was seeing at the Capitol.

Peters's book is, as far as I know, the second on its subject. There have been numerous books about Barrymores, including autobiographies, but only Hollis Alpert has previously attempted a history of the entire family. *The House of Barrymore* is much fuller, more thoroughly researched and annotated, than Alpert's book. In one way this history presents a special difficulty: when the author arrives at a certain point, the narrative becomes less a chronicle of succession than an account of three simultaneously crowned and reigning monarchs. Most of the book deals, quite rightly, with Lionel, Ethel, and John Barrymore, whose careers were quite separate almost all the time. Peters drives this troika well, keeping the three lives chronologically abreast with minimal jarring as she turns from one to another.

Mrs. Drew, born in London and brought here as a child, was the matriarch of the line. Her husband, born in Dublin and brought here as a child, died in 1862 and doesn't figure in the story. She was a vivid influence on both her children and her grandchildren. (When John was dying in Hollywood in 1942, he kept murmuring her family nickname, "Mummum.") All of them became successful actors. The best-known of her own children was John Drew the younger—I can remember the ads for his last appearance in New York in 1927—but Georgiana would possibly have been equally successful if she hadn't died of tuberculosis at 37.

Georgiana was the mother of the trio we know best. Her husband was an English actor born Herbert Blythe who called himself Maurice Barrymore. Handsome, dissolute (he died insane, of paresis), he added to the Drew legacy not only his own talent, but a canted view of sobriety and discipline that addled the other strain, especially in John's case. This, to use a worn but terribly apt term, was tragic, because Maurice's three children were gifted even beyond their most celebrated forebears. Ethel was the steadiest of the three and, in the truest sense, the most successful, but even she, racked by various personal problems, did not fulfill herself as, say, Charlotte Cushman did.

Part of the trouble was that these three were overgifted—so much so that initially they weren't even greatly drawn to acting. Ethel was a pianist of some ability.

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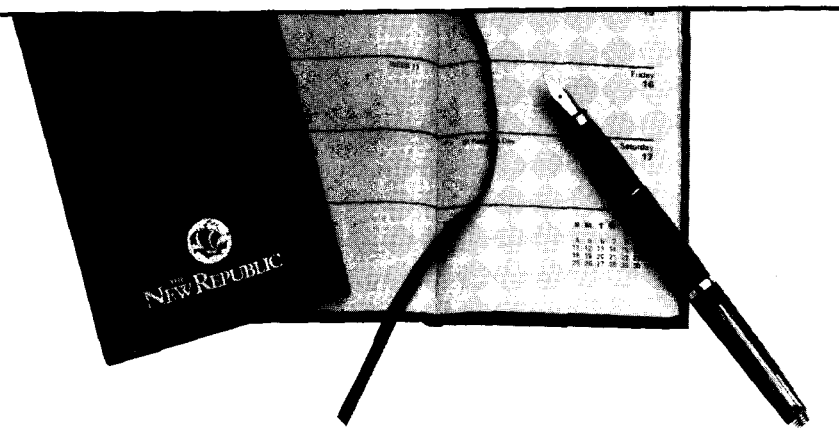
Lionel could paint and etch and compose; after his first marriage, he spent the years from 1906 to 1909 in Paris, studying art. John had notable ability as an illustrator. But all were inducted early into acting by the family. Subsequently, for differing reasons, they returned to it.

Very soon in their acting lives, a new phenomenon crossed their paths: film. Not long after Lionel came back from Paris, he was the first to venture into the new medium (as it happens, in a building that stood about a hundred yards from where I'm writing this), although he also continued to work in the theater until 1927. All through their lives, Peters tells us, film existed as a golden trap or a golden refuge for these three theater figures. John said once, "I was a bridge between two periods, and my period has passed," a statement that marks him as a native of the era of film's arrival. Actors today, born into a world in which film and theater have long co-existed, have—or can have—quite different attitudes.

The three Barrymores never appeared in the same play, though once, in 1905, all three of them were involved in different parts of a double bill. (The only time all three acted together was in the film *Rasputin and the Empress*, 1932. It's also worth noting that all three of them appeared together several years ago on a 20-cent U.S. postage stamp.) During the Broadway season of 1919-20, each of the three starred in his or her own play. In 1917 and 1919 John and Lionel did plays together, *Peter Ibbetson* and *The Jest*.

John, after making a reputation as a light comedian, had done Galsworthy's somber *Justice* with great success; after the two plays with his brother, he moved on to Shakespeare, *Richard III* and *Hamlet*. (He also did the latter in London.) Lionel then felt constrained to try Shakespeare, and he used John's designer, Robert Edmond Jones, for a production of *Macbeth*. It failed badly. Lionel did some plays after that, but four years later, in 1925, he left permanently for Hollywood. Ethel, great though she certainly was, didn't prove it in the classics. In her sixty-year theater career, she appeared in only three Shakespearean roles, Juliet, Ophelia, and Portia, and then only when she was getting too old for them. She did Ibsen once and Sheridan once. Her reputation was made in new plays, good and less good.

Each of the trio had personal peculiarities. Prominent among Ethel's was her slowness in ending a dreadful marriage. (She had turned down a number of quite eligible suitors—including, during some young years in London, Winston Churchill.) True, the Barrymores were Catho-



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■ The United Nations seems obsessed with Israel. The level of U.N. preoccupation with Israel is totally out of proportion with events in that country. In the course of the last ten years, the General Assembly has entertained 175 hostile resolutions dealing with Israel and the "Palestinian problem". During that entire year it did not once criticize any of the Arab countries. Every year, the General Assembly goes through the charade of considering the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations. In 1985, the General Assembly of the U.N. covered itself with everlasting shame by declaring that Zionism is racism. The Security Council has proposed numerous anti-Israel resolutions during the last three years. All of them would have passed unanimously or with lopsided majorities had it not been for vetoes of most of them by the United States.

■ Recently, the attention of the United Nations was particularly engaged by two incidents in Israel, namely the killing of seven Arab laborers by a demented Israeli solitary gunmen, and by the death of 17 Arab on the Jerusalem Temple Mount. In that incident, a mob of 4,000 Arabs, thrown into a frenzy by their clerics, loosed fusillades of rocks and other missiles on Jewish worshippers gathered for prayers by the Western Wall. In both cases, the Security Council dropped all other business, promulgated anti-Israel resolutions and requested that teams of "observers" be sent to Israel, presumably to report on the alleged abuses perpetrated on the "Palestinians" by that country and by its government. One wonders why, regardless of the merits of the anti-Israel accusations, any "observers" at all would be required. Israel, and the territories administrated by it, are not some remote region in some outlying area of a dark empire. There are more journalists, photographers, television crews, reporters, parliamentary delegations, professional groups, fact finding missions, and human rights activists there than in any other spot on the globe. Never in modern history has there been a spot so microscopically and so meticulously inspected as the small country of Israel. One questions why a delegation of U.N. observers would be required and what mischievous purposes their observations could possibly serve.

■ The obsession of the United Nations with Israel and its alleged violations is the more remarkable considering that organizations's total disregard of the unspeakable barbarities of so many other nations in the Middle East. For instance, the Security Council meeting that resolved to send a delegation to Israel to investigate "abuses" was inspired by the PLO, whose numberless outrages -- including the killing of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics, the bombing of tourist buses, old-age homes, synagogues, airports, airliners, and so much more -- have never received the slightest attention by the U.N. Nor have the unspeakable human rights abuses and sickening crimes by the Arab states ever been discussed in that body. These crimes, instigated and supported by Arab governments, include the slaughter in 1982 of over 20,000 Syrian citizens in Hama, at the command of Hafez Assad, that country's president (and our most recent ally!); the poison-gassing of over 5,000 Iraqi Kurdish citizens by Saddam Hussein; over 100,000 Lebanese civilians killed by PLO gunmen, and other militias and terrorist groups; Egyptian troops cold-bloodedly killing over 100 rioting police in 1986; the Algerian police indiscriminatingly machine-gunning hundreds of its own citizens in a few days of rioting; the Libyans assassinating untold numbers of their opponents inside the country and outside; hundreds of Iranian pilgrims ruthlessly being gunned down by the Saudis during the pilgrimage to Mecca; the hundreds of thousands being killed in the Sudan in inter-racial massacres, Lebanon's rape by Syria, and so much more. The United Nations did not concern itself with any of these.

Among the hypocritical accusers of Israel in the U.N. Security Council are the French and the Soviets, merchants of death who have supplied Iraq with the weaponry, the materials and the technology to produce chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. Without them, the present situation would not have arisen. These same cynics bitterly denounced Israel for destroying the Iraqi nuclear capability in 1981. Had Israel not done that, Iran would now in all likelihood be an atomic wasteland and no U.S. or U.N. presence in the area would now be possible. And such stalwarts democrats and practitioners of human rights as Yemen, Cuba, Zaire, and Malaysia also sit on the Security Council and cynically condemn Israel, the only people in the entire Middle East that have a freely elected government and that contributed to the Western legacy the very concepts of justice and of human rights. Is the U.N. a proper forum to sit in judgment about Israel and about the events in the middle East? The evidence is clear and the answer is obvious.

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lic, but her husband was a vicious wife-beater. After eleven years and three children she consulted the then cardinal in New York, and he agreed to let her divorce if she promised not to remarry. Possibly her fondness for drink began with this marriage; it certainly didn't end with the divorce.

Lionel, no stranger to alcohol, was introduced to cocaine by his second wife, whom he adored. Cocaine and all, he adored her so much that when she died in 1936, he moved out of their house and preserved it as a shrine to her. In the spring of 1939 he began to feel guilt about that empty house. Says Peters:

> *On inspiration* he wrote the great Richard Strauss that if he should decide to come to America, he would turn over his house and staff to him and his family. To his astonishment the composer he worshiped replied that he had made reservations on the *Queen Mary*.

Lionel was then supposed to swear out an affidavit so that Strauss could get an immigration visa, which is when his lawyer stepped in and dissuaded him, reminding him that Strauss had been photographed with Göring and Goebbels. "On reflection Lionel decided that it might be difficult to explain to Louis B. Mayer [the head of MGM, his employer] that he was sheltering a Nazi." (Shrine though it was, the house eventually went to settle some income tax difficulties that beset Lionel.)

In his later years Lionel's wheelchair became world famous, but his reason for needing it is still unclear. He denied that he had arthritis or rheumatism, and at different times said his knee trouble was the result of an old gym injury or a fall in the bathtub. His manager believed that Lionel's joints had been affected by syphilis.

But neither Ethel nor Lionel could compare in wildness with John. First, and far, far beyond his four marriages, was amour. He said he was introduced to sex at 15 by his father's second wife. After that, he never looked back or, one might say figuratively, up. He was not a tall man, but he was perfectly built, had a face that was beautiful beyond belief, a voice that he could play like several instruments, and a Byronic spirit that he could use as an aphrodisiac. In addition—which, strangely, was part of his attraction for some—he drank. That one verb scarcely covers the subject.

His drinking and his attraction for women would not greatly distinguish him from some others in his profession, including his father. But John had genius. He combined his wildness with an amount of work that, considering his

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personal life and his many physical breakdowns, is another astonishment, especially since much of that work was fine and some of it wonderful. Opinions on his Shakespeare differ, but from his few phonograph records and film clips, we can gather that at the very least his Richard and his Hamlet were unforgettable. Bernard Shaw criticized him for cutting the text of *Hamlet* sharply and presenting more of Barrymore's acting than Shakespeare's writing. But Laurence Olivier, who saw the production when he was 17, said later that in his own performance of Hamlet, he "emulated" John.

I saw John onstage only once, the only time it was possible for me, when he came to New York in 1940 in a piece of claptrap called *My Dear Children*. He played an aging Shakespearean star, and this permitted him to do snatches of Shakespeare. By then, with his drinking, his breakdowns, his amorous broils, he had become something of a national joke, and he seemed almost to enjoy this status. During the pre-Broadway tour, newspapers were full of his ad-libs during performances. The night I saw the play, when he took a drink, he said, "Christ, how I wish this was real." The production had been directed by Otto Preminger, but he could hardly be held responsible for all that happened onstage.

After that play, as Peters aptly says, "Jack had nothing to sell . . . but his own degradation." But in *My Dear Children* the degradation was not yet complete. Brooks Atkinson wrote truly: "He can still act like a man who knows the art. . . . Although he has recklessly played the fool for a number of years, he is nobody's fool in *My Dear Children*, but a superbly gifted actor on a tired holiday." I've never seen an American actor like him. Marlon Brando and George C. Scott have touches of his quality; Christopher Plummer (to include a Canadian) is his equal in technique. But none of them conveys the full effect of John Barrymore.

In a way he was an exemplum of our existence: we saw the marvels he was giving us, and we could infer the marvels that were beyond his grasp. His gifts and his failure to make the most of them were like a highly intensified summary of human powers and impotence. He could have done anything, we felt. When he spoke, when he gestured, his voice and his movement were marvels in themselves, quite apart from the role he was playing; and as he displayed his powers, there seemed in him almost a counterpoint of regret that he had betrayed those powers. That, in this trumpery play, was tragedy—a tragedy familiar, in lower key, to many mortals.

To sample John's quality, see three of the best films he made: *Reunion in Vienna*, *The Great Man Votes*, and, above all, *Twentieth Century*. In the last, he plays a theater director-producer based on David Belasco and plays him with a knowledge of nineteenth-century acting virtuosity that enables him to embroider the performance delightfully. Two of Ethel's better films are *The Paradine Case* and *None But the Lonely Heart*. Quite different in each, she is an Athenian figure in both. But they are not Ethel at her best, as she was, for instance, onstage in *The Corn Is Green* (1940). Lionel made the most films of the trio—at one point he also directed—and can easily be sampled. His performance of Duval *père* in Garbo's *Camille* might be cited. Lionel and John can be seen together, entertainingly, in *Arsène Lupin*.

A word about Barrymore descendants. Of Ethel's three children, one, her daughter, had some success as a singer. John also had three children, two of whom, Diana and John Jr., were actors, with quite mixed results. The best-known of the family today is the teenaged Drew Barrymore, granddaughter of John, who charmed in *E.T.* and has had troubles since.

Margot Peters has written four previous books, one of which, *Bernard Shaw and the Actresses*, I have read and admired. The writing in this new book is not so firmly controlled. It seems often to strain for snappy effect, particularly at the ends of sections and chapters. ("He was hooked. Death was the only escape. Well, he was trying.") Her references to minor persons in the story are sometimes inadequate. Her complete description of Kenneth Macgowan: "the former Broadway critic gone Hollywood." True, but it doesn't quite characterize the man who ran the Provincetown Playhouse with Robert Edmond Jones and Eugene O'Neill, who was an early producer of O'Neill and a considerable influence on him. Occasionally Peters slips into sorry critical cliché. "One could argue that Olivier *acted* Hamlet, Barrymore *was* Hamlet."

But she has made this long and complex story completely fascinating—horrendously so at times—even to someone who thought he knew a bit on the subject. The bibliographical notes themselves, done in narrative form, are interesting, full of meat. Most important, she has understood the basic truth in her material: not only is it humanly gripping, it is a considerable fragment of a cultural history in transition. ●

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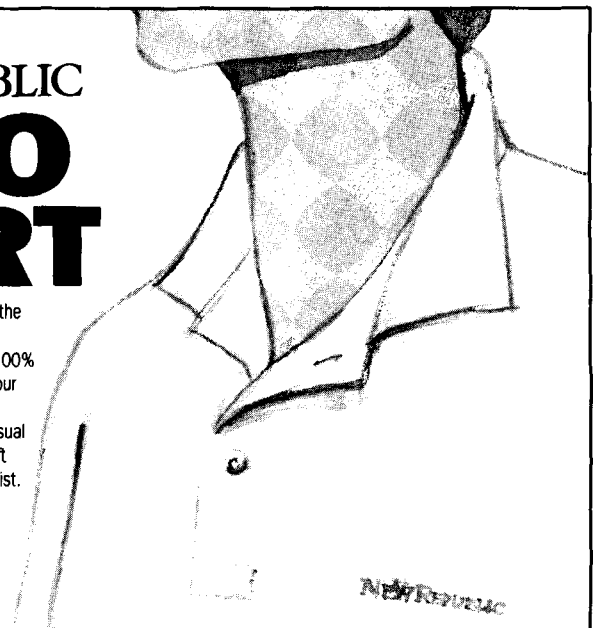

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Revise, revise

AMONG ITS OTHER CONTRIBUtions to college life, the recent curriculum revision craze has introduced the faculty meeting from hell. I know, to any seasoned professor, that probably sounds redundant. But a recent document from the English department at Syracuse University suggests that the traditional squabbling over committee assignments, schedules, grading curves, etc., is petty irritation compared with the institutionalized masochism of the new era. Challenging the canon is billed as a revolutionary adventure, but it turns out to be awfully tedious. For half a decade, the poor professors at Syracuse have been conferring about a proposed "shift from privileging a particular body of culturally sanctioned texts to emphasizing the modes of critical inquiry . . . and the political implications of such modes." This hasn't been mere radical chatter in the halls and over lunch. The faculty (from the most junior on up—the department believes in academic democracy) has been spending endless hours in "the agora, the public meeting place, rather than the private study," and no doodling has been allowed. The debate has entailed a "nearly constant flow of memoranda and position papers." Welcome to the Washington bureaucrat's mode of critical inquiry, and to its result: the faceless memo, full of talk about process rather than substance, with a crowd of initials in the corner. The new curriculum, according to a newsletter circulated to students, "was not written by one hand; it contains contradictions and compromises. . . . [It] is therefore a document that in its entirety satisfies no one." Which means, you guessed it, more meetings: the curriculum "acknowledges its own provisionality, and looks to its own further transformation." In the meantime, the department dodges responsibility in high rhetorical style: "As this document becomes public, our individual hands are effaced; signing here we reaffirm it as palimpsest." Washington, where covering your tracks is an art, may be able to learn something here. "To: The Secretary. From: The Undersecretary for Critical Inquiry. Re: The attached interagency palimpsest."

WITH ALL THAT THEY'VE HAD TO endure, it's no wonder that the professors feel inclined to spread the pain around. That the students will have to suffer too is clear from the results of the faculty's poll of English majors about their reasons for choosing the field. To crusading professors, the responses must have seemed infuriatingly unsophisticated. A gee-whiz "Always liked to write" was the overwhelming favorite among student answers, followed closely by "Always liked to read," and "Always good at English." Quite a few respondents expressed a "Desire to read classics and improve cultural literacy." Trailing all these was a "Desire to develop critical judgment and analytic thinking." Which one of the above turned out to be the correct answer? "The end of an education in literature," the report on the curricular changes announces, "will be, not the traditional 'well-read' student, but a student capable of critique—of actively pressuring, resisting and questioning cultural texts." Among the many contrasts between the current campus convulsion and its predecessor, one crucial difference leaps out: no one can say the students are running the university anymore.

E. D. HIRSCH JR., PROFESSOR OF English at the University of Virginia and author four years ago of the best-selling *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know* (and, more recently, of *The First Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*), is a veteran of the battle of the books. Back when his popular primer came out (alongside Allan Bloom's even bigger hit, *The Closing of the American Mind*), he tended to get lumped in the traditionalist "Great Books" camp, thanks to his prescriptive list of roughly 5,000 key references and phrases that every presentable citizen should know. No one will make that mistake again. "I'm not interested in whether anybody ever reads *Romeo and Juliet*," he recently announced, according to an article in *The Los Angeles Times*. "I'm interested that when *Romeo and Juliet* is mentioned people will know what I'm talking about." Goodbye Bloom, who has a rather different view. ("He who has read one book well is in a position to read any book, while he for whom books are easy currency is rendered incapable of living fully with one." See David Bromwich's review of Bloom's *Giants and Dwarfs* in this issue.) And, for that matter, goodbye Syracuse English department. Hirsch has come up with the simplest cure imaginable for the canon debate. Faculty meetings will be far briefer, almost painless, if everyone agrees in advance that whatever else we may do with books, there's no need to read (or pressure, or resist, or question) them.

FOR ANY PROFESSORS WHO ARE sick of the "political correctness" crusade but too exhausted to enroll in the beleaguered ranks of its opponents, there's always Robert Mondavi's "mission" to join. On retiring from the helm of the Mondavi Winery in the Napa Valley, America's most prominent vintner announced that "the time has come for me to pursue my interests in wine and culture" and assembled a panel of clergy, doctors, and educators to help him. His "mission" (his term) is refreshingly retrograde. Setting himself against the increasingly powerful anti-alcohol lobby, he wants to champion wine's contributions to modern culture. Something tells me that Mr. Mondavi is a crypto-defender as well of the cultural contributions of dead white males. After all, on behalf of his cause he invokes the Great Books, the hoary test of time, and the most entrenched elites. Wine, he says, is "the temperate, sacred, romantic mealtime beverage recommended in the Bible." And more: "It's a liquid food that has been praised for centuries by rulers, philosophers, physicians, priests, and poets for life, health, and happiness." Praised by rulers! And for centuries, yet. For academics, this is the wildest possible talk. If the educators on Mr. Mondavi's panel are even slightly with-it, they are likely to be stunned by his brazen neoiconoclasm. It may take more than a little of the wine he surely serves at his mission meetings to loosen them up.

IN FRANCE, THE PURSUIT OF ORthographic correctness is proving as labyrinthine as the quest for political correctness over here. The revisionist debate currently rocking the country, the proposal to simplify the spelling of 1,000 or so French words (and remove circumflexes, change hyphenations), has lately taken a peculiar turn. During the summer the High Commission on the French Language approved the reforms, emboldened by a unanimous vote of support for the changes from, of all stodgy places, the Académie française, the venerable protector of the French tongue. Now, however, the "Immortals" (as the academicians are known) are suddenly claiming befuddlement, not unanimity, and all of France is in a dither. Many Academy members say they never showed up for the fateful vote, and those who were present seem to have been not exactly a" there. Even the academician who chaired the meeting was, well, distracted: "If I voted for [the changes], it was because I was only half paying attention," he told *The New York Times*. The proceedings of the Academy are top secret, but I'm beginning to suspect that quite a few of the Immortals subscribe to Mr. Mondavi's credo about the relationship between culture and a particular liquid food.

ANN HULBERT

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